NOMINAL, VERBAL, AND COMPLEX ELLIPSES

IN ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN WRITTEN

DISCOURSE: A CROSSLINGUISTIC

STUDY

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Chapter I

Introduction

The present thesis addresses one of the universals of language – namely, ellipsis, i.e., the deletion of language material based on the assumption that recovery thereof will be easy to achieve. More specifically, this thesis is meant to be a cross-linguistic study of three types of ellipses (nominal, verbal, and complex, respectively) identified in English and Romanian written discourse. The aim of the study is to establish and discuss the areas of overlap and/or of dissimilarity noticed among the three above-mentioned categories of ellipsis across the two languages. The main rationale behind the decision to analyze real discourse lay in the researcher's desire to see whether claims made in theoretical discussions of *ad hoc* generated samples of ellipsis are validated by findings obtained upon investigating real discourse.

The thesis consists of five chapters. The present chapter (*Introduction*) is meant to introduce the reader into the atmosphere of the study and to give a brief outline of the way the study is designed.

Chapter II (*Ellipsis – An overview*) defines ellipsis, reviews the most important approaches to ellipsis undertaken in the last three decades, and introduces the basic taxonomy employed in the study – retrievability, locus in the clause, mopho-syntax of the ellipted element(s), source and target, total ellipsis vs. partial ellipsis, relative vs. absolute identity, etc.

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Chapter III (*Methods*) presents and describes the samples of written discourse under analysis, it attempts to further familiarize the reader with the taxonomy and the methodological conventions used throughout the study, and it reveals some of the difficulties encountered during the data analysis. Also, the chapter enunciates the purpose of the study.

Chapter IV (*Text analysis*) focuses on the findings of the study. The three categories of ellipsis are approached one by one. For each of these categories, the findings obtained in the two languages are first presented and discussed separately and then contrastively.

Chapter V (*Conclusions*) provides the conclusions arrived at upon conducting the study and compares the results obtained here with the findings of studies undertaken in years past.

Chapter II

Ellipsis – An Overview

2.1. Previous approaches to ellipsis

Given the broad nature of the issue of ellipsis and the great variety of elliptical construc-
tions existing in language, it is not at all surprising that ellipsis usage has been tackled
from different perspectives. Likewise, it is not at all surprising that oftentimes the people
discussing ellipsis preferred to tackle only certain aspects of it, rather than attempt an
overall approach to it. For example, most of the investigators of ellipsis within the verb
phrase have only addressed certain issues within it, namely verb phrase deletion (Garn-
ham, 1987; Hardt, 1992 and 1999; Kempson, 1995 and 1997; Klein, 1987; Tanenhaus &
Carlson, 1990; Valmala, 1996; Williams, 1977) or gapping (Hudson, 1988 and 1989;
Jackendoff, 1971; Kuno, 1976; Ross, 1970). Also, studies tackling the issue of noun
phrase ellipsis have focused either on noun phrases functioning as subjects (Bates & De-
vescovi, 1989) or on noun phrases functioning as objects (Ito, 1993). There exist, at the
same time, studies revolving around the issue of comparative ellipsis (Gawron, 1992;
Pinkham, 1984) and studies addressing the issue of ellipsis in coordination (Greenbaum,
1976 and 1977; Greenbaum & Meyer, 1982; Hudson, 1988; Meyer, 1979 and 1995;
Sanders, 1977; van Oirsouw, 1987; Vet, 1996). Two further aspects related to ellipsis that
seem to have attracted linguists are the issue of ellipsis in newspaper headlines (Jenkins,

1990; Perfetti, Beverly, Bell, Rodgers, & Faux, 1987) and the issue of ellipsis in advertising (Garnham & Oakhill, 1992). All of the research concerning ellipsis mentioned above has investigated the discourse of adults. However, interest has occasionally been shown in child discourse, as well (Foley, Nuñez del Prado, Barbier, & Lust, 1997; Postman *et al.*, 1997).

Most of the approaches to ellipsis espouse a monolingual perspective, the language under analysis in most, if not all, of the studies listed above being English. However, in more recent years, cross-linguistic analyses have been undertaken, as well. For instance, Placencia (1995) and López (1999) contrast English and Spanish, while Fukushima (1999) contrasts English with Japanese. Other studies display wider scopes, even, in that they tackle three languages at one and the same time. For instance, van Oirsouw (1987) contrasts three Germanic languages (namely, English, Dutch, and German), and Bates and Devescovi (1989) contrast two somewhat related languages – namely, English and Italian – with a definitely unrelated one: Hungarian.

The present study is meant to belong with the cross-linguistic trend, in that it proposes to offer an insight into how ellipsis operates in two not very closely related Western languages: English and Romanian.

2.2. Reasons underlying ellipsis usage

One of the main reasons underlying ellipsis usage seems to be economy. Important as it might be, nevertheless, economy of time and/or effort in the process of getting the message across does not fully account for either the frequency or the commonplaceness of ellipses in everyday discourse. In close partnership with economy operate other factors, as well. On the one hand, there is the efficiency and/or clarity of the act of communica-

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tion. On the other hand, there is the degree of activeness and/or accessibility of the discourse element subject to ellipsis (Sperber & Wilson, 1987). A further factor that seems to have a say in the issue of ellipsis usage has social coloring, and can translate as the desire to show solidarity, the wish to impose distance, or the will to achieve intimacy (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Cairns, 1989; Placencia, 1995). However, given that the social factor is mainly an attribute of oral, rather than of written, discourse (and therefore does not fit into the scope of the present study), it will not be focused upon here.

Two of the factors underlying ellipsis usage enumerated above – namely, efficiency and economy – seem to be playing more salient parts. The scenario is relatively simple: the speaker/writer has in mind a message part of which he/she leaves out, on the grounds that it will be inferred, and supplied, by the listener/reader on account of its degree of activeness/accessibility in the discourse. In other words, it is assumed that the left-out element(s) will be easy to retrieve.

The phenomenon of ellipsis is diametrically opposed to that of redundancy (Grant-Davie, 1995, p.457). Whereas redundancy means making one's contribution wordier, hence heavier, than necessary, by provision of items that are not actually needed for the message to successfully get across, ellipsis implies omission on the part of the speaker/writer of part(s) of the message that the listener/reader is expected to identify and fill out on his/her own.

Both lack of ellipsis and overuse thereof can affect the quality of the message. For instance, a discourse devoid of ellipses may translate as an unnecessary consumption of energy, and particularly time, on the part of the participants involved, speaker/writer and listener/reader alike. In contrast, a discourse too imbued with ellipsis may annihilate any

savings of time at the coding end of the act of communication by ultimately bringing about more consumption of energy at the decoding end – note that overuse of ellipsis is likely to make decoding harder, if at all possible, to undertake (de Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981; Placencia, 1995).

In this line of thought, Leech (1983) proposed the principles of economy and of clarity, whereby the possibility of shortening the text "while keeping the message unimpaired... reduces the amount of time and effort involved both in encoding and in decoding" (p.67). In the same line of thought, Thomas (1987) emphasized that there is a general tendency for the speaker/writer "to provide a little more information than is absolutely necessary... in order to protect the communication" (p.12). However, Thomas (1987) overtly admitted that it is difficult to judge, and still more difficult to measure, the exact meaning of "a little more" – which suggests that establishing the semantics of "a little more" is a subjective decision.

As enunciated by Grice (1975), any act of communication requires certain standards to be satisfied for the message to get across successfully. These standards (referred to as the 'cooperative principle') are associated with a number of so-called 'conversational maxims' – the maxims of quality, quantity, relation, and manner (Grice, 1975). One who abides by the maxim of quantity should avoid making one's discourse either more informative or less informative than required. The maxim of quality stipulates that one should not say what is (or what one believes to be) false. The maxim of relation requires that one be relevant, while the maxim of manner requires that one be brief and orderly and avoid obscurity of expression and ambiguity. The Gricean maxims ushered in Sperber and Wilson's 'relevance theory,' in which humans are described as inclined to

"obtain from each item of information as great a contextual effect as possible for as small as possible a processing effort" (Sperber & Wilson, 1987, p.702).

Grice's (1975) maxims and Sperber and Wilson's (1987) relevance intertwine. One of the outcomes of this intertwining is involved in the decision-making concerning the appropriacy of ellipsis in a certain context, depending on whether the communicative goal of clarity is best achieved by means of brevity or by means of repetition. Brevity makes it possible for the speaker/writer to communicate, and for the listener/reader to receive, the message in a form not carrying all the information – so long as the said information is available at both ends of the act of communication. At the same time, however, brevity can also bring about gaps in the communication – nay, it can even kill it (Greenbaum & Meyer, 1982; Meyer, 1995).

It follows therefore that any decision-making concerning ellipsis usage is the result of the interaction of at least two factors – economy vs. efficiency/clarity – filtered through the mind of the speaker/writer, and that use and/or avoidance of ellipsis is determined by establishing the maximally economical form that will ensure successful message conveyance. Other things being equal, people tend to follow the maxim "reduce as much as possible" (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985, p.860).

This tendency has not only been intuited, but also empirically supported. Indeed, analysis of naturally occurring discourse has shown that whatever grounds might exist for conveying ideas with maximum explicitness, there is a preference among language users for the most economical ways of expression. See, in this respect, Meyer's (1995) contrastive analysis of oral discourse and written discourse – a corpus made up of spontaneous conversation and legal cross-examination, on the one hand, and press reportage, belles

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lettres, learned writing, government documents, and fiction, on the other – in terms of which, when it comes to coordinated structures, at least, spoken discourse clarity seems to be best achieved by repetition, while written discourse clarity seems to call for ellipsis (Meyer, 1995, p.251). However, this generalization might be too broad, in that not all spoken and written discourses would necessarily display the same characteristics.

An attribute shared by all ellipted elements is that they necessarily represent old information. As pointed out in Cairns (1989), a speaker/writer introducing a new topic cannot resort to ellipsis without dramatically diminishing the likelihood that he/she will be understood. On the other hand, once introduced, a topic ceases to be new, and therefore is likely to become subject to ellipsis (Cairns, 1989, p.46).

An elliptical construction typically involves two factors: a source and a target (Dalrymple, Shieber, & Pereira, 1991). The source (also referred to as the 'antecedent') generally introduces a topic, which means that it carries new information; hence the necessity that it be a syntactically complete unit. As for the target, it necessarily carries old information; hence the possibility that some material be left out from it. This material needs to be inferred and supplied by the listener/reader. In the sentence *John provided the food, and Bill [provided] the drinks*, for instance, the first conjunct (*John provided the food*) is the source/antecedent, while the second (*Bill [provided] the drinks*) is the target. Note that the bracketing used above (like any bracketing to be met with in the present study) is meant to signal ellipsis of linguistic material.

It is important that both the source and the target be noticed, and it is crucial that the parallelism between them be perceived, in that ellipsis interpretation implies a carry-

over from the source of those elements which are not overtly present in the target (Dalrymple *et al.*, 1991; Shieber, Pereira, & Dalrymple, 1996).

Oftentimes, the source and the target assume one and the same grammatical structure; that is, they are structurally identical. Such is the case in *John provided the food, and Bill [provided] the drinks*. However, as pointed out by van Oirsouw (1987), identity is a relative notion. In other words, there is generally no requirement for absolute grammatical identity between ellipsis and antecedent (van Oirsouw, 1987, p.196). For instance, inflectional markers weigh differently in establishing identity: while some are overlooked, as is the -*s* for the third person singular of the simple present (e.g., *John likes jazz, but Bill doesn't [like jazz]*), others (e.g., present/past distinctions between verb forms) cannot normally be disregarded. Hence the unacceptability of sentences like, **John went fishing yesterday, and Bill [went fishing] tomorrow* (van Oirsouw, 1987, p.183).

As suggested by Vet (1996), ellipsis (whether absolute, as in *He sent an e-mail message to his sister and [he sent] a telegram to his parents*, or relative, as in *John likes jazz, but Bill doesn't [like jazz]*) can be interpreted in two distinct ways. On the one hand, it can be viewed as a discourse phenomenon, in that a sequence like *and [he sent] a telegram to his parents* or *but Bill doesn't [like jazz]*, respectively, can only be accepted and properly interpreted as part of a whole. On the other, it can be read as a syntactic phenomenon motivated by pragmatic factors, in that there must be some Gricean maxim at work in the light of which an element that is easy to retrieve or infer need not be explicitly expressed (Vet, 1996, p.357).

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2.3. Ellipsis – a definition

As we have discussed above, ellipsis is one of the mechanisms whereby humans can convey their acute feeling of shortage of time, and it represents a historically stable feature rooted in the assumption that the addressee (whether a listener, in the case of oral discourse, or a reader, in the case of written discourse) will find a way to properly decode the message conveyed by the addresser (whether a speaker or a writer) in spite of the fact that some elements in the message are not overtly present.

Ellipsis has not only been approached from different angles (see the enumeration in section 2.1 above); it has also been defined in different words. The usual perspective on ellipsis is that the understanding of the omitted element(s) can be achieved without word repetition. In a stricter interpretation, however, ellipsis is seen as a 'grammatical omission' – i.e., as a type of omission contrasted to other kinds of omission occurring in discourse (Quirk *et al.*, 1985, p.883).

Despite the different wordings, the definitions of the term ellipsis tend to converge toward the basic idea that it denotes an instance of discourse where "for reasons of economy, emphasis, or style, a part of the structure has been omitted, which is recoverable from a scrutiny of the context" (Crystal, 1985, p.107). The idea underlying this definition is that of the recoverability from the context of the ellipted element(s). However, a somewhat different perspective on ellipsis is also possible. For instance, Sanders (1977) suggested that ellipsis occurs where insertion of an element will not bring about changes in the meaning of the message. This definition differs from the one above in that the factor underlying it is no longer recovery, but rather insertion, of left-out material. Whichever the perspective, an instance of ellipsis entails a word/group of words that has been,

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or is being, left aside – i.e., unsaid. However, as pinpointed by Halliday and Hasan (1976), leaving a word/group of words unsaid does not necessarily mean making it difficult to understand. On the contrary, this instance of 'unsaid' carries in it the implication "but understood nevertheless" and thus makes the definition of ellipsis translate as something "going without saying" (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, pp.142-144).

To be fully acceptable, the definition of ellipsis must be broad enough to encompass the special instances wherein the word/group of words left out is retrievable, not from the linguistic context per se, but rather from the extralinguistic context. As a result, the definition encompasses, not only the 'textual' nature of ellipsis, i.e., the omission of words/groups of words on account of their retrievability in the neighboring discourse (Dalrymple *et al.*, 1991; Lobeck, 1988; Pulman, 1997), but also the facets of ellipsis sometimes referred to as 'situational,' i.e., retrievable from the situation within which the discourse occurs, as well as those labeled as 'structural,' i.e., implying knowledge of the grammar of the language, respectively (Cairns, 1989; Carter & McCarthy, 1995; Quirk *et al.*, 1985; Thomas, 1987).

2.3.1. Ellipsis vs. incompleteness

Since ellipsis entails leaving out one, or even several, element(s) from the discourse, based upon the assumption that the ellipted element(s) will be easy to retrieve, it might be inferred that, in a way, any sentence involving ellipsis is incomplete. However, whether a sentence wherein ellipsis occurs can in truth be regarded as incomplete depends on how the term 'incomplete' is defined. Literally, it denotes "something that… does not have all the parts or details that it needs" (Collins COBUILD, 1995, p.853). If one disregards the last part (*that it needs*) of the above definition, it might seem that ellipsis equates with

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syntactic incompleteness, in that a sentence involving ellipsis does not overtly carry all its parts. On the other hand, if one considers the definition as a whole, ellipsis does not entail pragmatic incompleteness – the fact that one, or several, element(s) is/are left out does not mean that the meaning(s) of the not-overtly-present element(s) is/are not carried over.

The issue of incompleteness is context-dependent (Rastall, 1994). What may at first sight appear to be incomplete might in fact, in a certain context, express a complete thought. In contrast, despite its importance, grammatical completeness does not in itself ensure communicational completeness (Rastall, 1994, p.85). In this train of thought, the traditional perception of the sentence as a twofold relation established between a subject, most typically defined as "the 'doer' of the action" (Crystal, 1985, p.293), and a predicate, which refers to all the "obligatory [sentence] constituents other than the subject" (Crystal, 1985, p.241), would be likely to exclude from its scope utterances in most, if not all, languages. Definitely, the traditional definition of 'sentence' would not encompass utterances such as *The bigger, the better* or *Down with the government!* (Rastall, 1994, p.82). Nevertheless, in spite of their lack of grammatical completeness, the two examples above (and, along with them, all the like constructions as well as all the elliptical constructions that might be provided as answers to requests of information) convey complete thoughts. In other words, they are complete, communication-wise.

There exist two types of incomplete sentences: sentence fragments and fragmentary sentences. Sentence fragments, which necessarily involve ellipsis, are "merely the result of a punctuation device meant [when encountered in written discourse] to indicate a dramatic pause for emphasis" (Quirk *et al.*, 1985, p.849). A fragment is – potentially, at least – ambiguous despite the lack of any trace of ambiguity in its antecedent (Kempson,

1997, p.11). For instance, in *John wants Bill to visit Mary in hospital. And Sue too*, the deletion of the verb phrase makes way for three equally acceptable readings. In one of the readings, *Sue* is perceived as subject of the ellipted verb phrase *wants Bill to visit Mary in hospital*, which means that the fragment reads *Sue wants Bill to visit Mary in hospital*. In the second reading, *Sue* is interpreted as direct object to *wants*, and the reconstructed sentence reads *John wants Sue to visit Mary in hospital*. In the third reading, *Sue* is seen as object to the nonfinite *visit*, and the non-elliptical sentence reads *John wants Bill to visit Sue in hospital* (Kempson, 1995).

It is not enough that a fragment follow the antecedent; it has to be adjacent to it, as well (Kempson, 1995, p.68). Hence the lack of ambiguity of the reading of the fragment in the example *Diane informed the Superintendent and Helen got herself an appointment with the principal. And Mary too*, in that the fragment *And Mary too* will readily accept the reading *And Mary got herself an appointment with the principal*, but will by no means allow the reading *And Mary informed the Superintendent*.

In contrast to sentence fragments, fragmentary sentences are generally not perceived as elliptical. Fragmentary sentences are nonsentences more typical of written, than of oral, discourse, and they are particularly frequent in certain styles of fiction, e.g., *Two strange figures approached. Martians!*, in advertising, e.g., *It has a very distinctive taste. Crisp and fresh* and/or in notices, e.g., *No dogs without a leash* (Quirk *et al.*, 1985, p.845). Except for Quirk *et al.*'s (1985) postulate that fragmentary sentences are always appositive in nature, nevertheless, the differentiation between the two types of incomplete sentences is hard to make. As a result, the borderline between them seems to be drawn based on intuition, rather than on scientific thinking.

2.3.2. Retrieval of ellipted element(s)

As mentioned earlier, there are three sources of recovery for ellipses. They are the discourse itself (*textual* ellipses), the circumstances against which the discourse occurs (*situational* ellipses), and knowledge of the structure of the language (*structural* ellipses), respectively.

2.3.2.1. Textual ellipsis

Textual ellipses refer to those instances of words/groups of words left unsaid in the discourse which can be inferred – and supplied – on the basis of the availability of the antecedent in the neighboring discourse (Dalrymple *et al.*, 1991; Lobeck, 1988; Pulman, 1997; Quirk *et al.*, 1985; van Oirsouw, 1987). Mention should be made here that the label 'antecedent' is not entirely felicitous, in that its etymology might suggest that the source always precedes the target – which is most frequently, yet not always, true (Quirk *et al.*, 1985, p.862). Indeed, while the key to the elliptical construction is, more often than not, found in the discourse preceding the locus of ellipsis, in which case the ellipsis is *anaphoric* in nature (e.g., *If John can't do it, then no one can [do it]*), at times the antecedent needs to be retrieved from the discourse following the locus of ellipsis (e.g., *If John can't [do it], then no one can do it*), in which case the ellipsis is *cataphoric* in nature. Despite its lack of felicity, nevertheless, the term 'antecedent' seems to be favored over the more accurate synonym 'source' in most of the literature of the field.

Co-presence in the text of the antecedent translates, therefore, as either anaphora or cataphora. Anaphoric ellipses can, in turn, be subclassified in terms of whether the retrievability of the ellipted element(s) is based in the previous discourse of the current speaker, as in *John provided the food, and Bill [provided] the drinks*, or in the previous

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discourse of either <u>one of the interlocutors,</u> in a multi-party linguistic interaction, or of <u>the interlocutor,</u> in a two-party one – see, for example, the interaction between Speaker A's words *I told John about it...* and Speaker B's response *And I [told] Bill.* The former subcategory can be referred to as *individual* ellipsis, and the latter as *interpersonal* ellipsis (Cairns, 1989). While individual ellipsis is the only option in descriptive written discourse, individual ellipsis and interpersonal ellipsis seem to be equally valid options where characters'/people's speech is rendered.

2.3.2.2. Situational ellipsis

In addition to the purely textual approach, in terms of which ellipsis is always recovered from the neighboring discourse, there also exists a not-strictly-linguistic definition of ellipsis. The latter definition refers to a type of deletion retrievable, not from the neighboring discourse, but from the extralinguistic context. Such instances of ellipsis are generally referred to as situational/exophoric (Cairns, 1989; Carter & McCarthy, 1995; Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Quirk *et al.*, 1985; Thomas, 1987).

Situational ellipsis (such as the ellipsis of the direct object in *After waiting for the light to change to green, he crossed [the street] in a hurry*) is oftentimes seen as an attribute of informality; hence the opinion that it is "restricted to familiar (generally spoken) English" (Quirk *et al.*, 1985, p.896). However, in an analysis of samples of oral discourse (mainly casual conversation, but also narratives, service encounters, and language-in-action) belonging to speakers of a wide spectrum of ages as well as social and geographical backgrounds in the British Isles, Carter and McCarthy (1995) found that naturally occurring informal discourse does not necessarily rely more on situational ellipsis than does written discourse. This finding challenges the validity of Quirk *et al.*'s (1985)

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perception of the formal vs. informal (i.e., familiar) dichotomy as the key factor deter-

mining whether or not situational ellipsis is appropriate in a certain type of discourse.

2.3.2.3. Structural ellipsis

The third type of ellipsis, structural ellipsis, involves omission of purely structural ele-

ments on the basis of the recoverability of the full form, "not through knowledge of the

text, but simply through knowledge of grammatical structure" (Quirk *et al.*, 1985, p.861).

For Quirk *et al.* (1985), the understanding of sentences like *She said [that] she had no*

idea who the man was necessitates provision of the ellipted complementizer *that*. How-

ever, *that* is not the only element that can be ellipted due to its recoverability via knowl-

edge of the structure. Along with it, relative pronouns (*who/whom/which*) and preposi-

tions (*on, for*, etc.) can be subject to omission, as well – witness sentences like, *Do you*

know the guy [who(m)] she is going out with? and *The Club meets [on] Monday eve-*

nings, respectively.

In the traditional (i.e., formalist) perceptions of grammar, the three examples

above are elliptical in nature, in that they drop *that*, the relative pronoun *who(m)*, and the

preposition *on*, respectively. According to Quirk *et al.* (1985), there are two reasons un-

derlying the elliptical nature of such sentences. The first is that they will readily accept

insertion of the ellipted element without affecting the meaning of the message conveyed

– witness the synonymy between *She said she had no idea who the man was* and *She said*

that she had no idea who the man was. As for the second factor indicating the elliptical

nature of sentences such as the three above, it is that omission of either *that* or

who(m)/which or a preposition is not always applicable. For instance, where the relative

pronoun functions as object of a preposition, omission thereof will be perfectly accept-

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able if the preposition governing it occurs in clause-final position (e.g., *Do you know the guy [who(m)] she is going out with?*). However, omission of the same relative pronoun will no longer be possible if the said pronoun follows the preposition governing it (**Do you know the guy with [who(m)] she is going out?*).

In contrast to the formalist view presented above, the functionalist perspective on grammar regards sentences such as *She said she had no idea who the man was* and/or *Do you know the guy she is going out with?* as non-elliptical. Rather, these sentences represent synonyms of their counterparts wherein *that* and *who(m)*, respectively, are overtly present. In other words, functional grammar does not admit to the existence of structural ellipsis.

In conclusion, one's recognition of structural ellipsis or non-recognition thereof lies in one's orientation to syntax. Whereas some perspectives on grammar admit to the existence of structural ellipsis, others do not. With those who accept it, structural ellipsis entails conversancy with the ways language works. As for the decision concerning the appropriacy of resorting to structural ellipsis, it is governed either by pragmatic factors (e.g., the genre at issue) or by purely linguistic ones (e.g., word order).

2.3.2.4. Ellipsis in terms of recoverability – a summary

As seen above, ellipsis recovery lies in the context of the act of communication, whether linguistic or extralinguistic, and/or in one's familiarity with the structure of the language. *Textual* ellipses necessitate antecedents overtly present in the neighboring discourse. If their antecedents are retrievable from the prior discourse, ellipses are *anaphoric*. In contrast, if their antecedents occur in the following discourse, ellipses are *cataphoric*. Anaphoric ellipses can be subclassified in terms of whether the antecedent has occurred in the

discourse of the current speaker (*individual* ellipsis) or in the discourse of a co-participant in the communication (*interpersonal* ellipsis).

Situational ellipses base their retrieval in the extralinguistic context within which the act of communication occurs. Situational ellipses represent a controversial issue, in that they are sometimes perceived as typical mainly of familiar discourse (see Quirk *et al.*, 1985). However, empirical data analysis (see Carter & McCarthy, 1995) rather suggests that situational ellipses are not necessarily more characteristic of informal discourse than they are of formal discourse.

As for *structural* ellipses, they are a special category of ellipses, in that they base their existence in one's knowledge of the structure of the language and/or in one's orientation to syntax. Structural ellipses are situated midway between textual ellipses and situational ellipses, in that the elements to supply are retrieved neither from the neighboring discourse nor from the extralinguistic context against which the communication occurs. The interpretation of structural ellipses lies entirely in one's familiarity with the language. As for the decision concerning whether or not to resort to ellipsis, it is governed either by pragmatic factors (e.g., genre) or by purely linguistic ones (e.g., word order).

2.3.3. Position in the clause of the ellipted element(s)

2.3.3.1. Coordination ellipsis

A specific structurally-defined subcategory under which ellipsis frequently occurs is coordination. Given its high frequency of occurrence, it seems only normal that coordination ellipsis should represent the focus of a large number of studies tackling the issue of ellipsis (see, for instance, Fukushima, 1999; Greenbaum, 1976 and 1977; Greenbaum &

Meyer, 1982; Hudson, 1988; Koutsoudas, 1971; Meyer, 1979 and 1995; Ross, 1970; Sanders, 1977; van Oirsouw, 1987; Vet, 1996).

According to Sanders (1977), any coordination entails six elements. Three of these elements (namely, A, B, and C) occur in the 'preceding' (i.e., first) conjunct, while the remaining three (D, E, and F, respectively) occur in the 'following' (i.e., second) conjunct. It follows then that any coordination takes the shape ABC & DEF, wherein A and D are initial sequences, B and E – medial sequences, and C and F – final sequences (Greenbaum & Meyer, 1982; Meyer, 1995; Sanders, 1977; van Oirsouw, 1987). For instance, in the coordination *He likes coffee, and she likes tea*, the two noun phrases occurring as subjects (*he* and *she*) occupy positions A and D, the two instances of the verb *likes* occupy positions B and E, and the two noun phrases fulfilling the role of direct object (*coffee* and *tea*) occupy positions C and F, respectively.

Whatever its syntactic function (e.g., subject, adverbial, etc.), an element occurring in initial position in a clause is either an A or a D, depending on whether the clause is a preceding clause or a following one. It should be noted here that the literature of the field fails to specifically address the possibility that coordination might carry only two elements per clause, as is the case in *The sun set and they stopped*. It appears, nevertheless, that sentences such as the one above need to be interpreted as instances of coordination devoid of certain clause elements – in this particular case, final elements C and F, respectively. As a result, the sentence above follows the pattern AB & DE.

The three pairs of co-positional elements (A and D, B and E, and C and F, respectively) tend to be syntactically identical. For example, if A is an adverbial, then D will more often than not be an adverbial, as well (compare *Near the house is a yard, and*

in the yard is a puppy with *?Near the house is a yard, and a puppy is in the yard*). However, the tendency for there to exist syntactic parallelism between co-positional elements does not always hold true. Such is the case where the verbs in the two conjuncts differ in terms of transitivity — witness the sentences *The sun rose and they left the camp* and *The parents sat on a bench and the boys played ball*, where positions C and F are not syntactically parallel. Indeed, while position F in the sentences above is occupied by a direct object (*the camp* and *ball*, respectively), position C is either null, as in the case of the first example, or occupied by an element fulfilling a different syntactic role, as in the case of the adverbial *on a bench* in the second.

Sanders (1977) classified languages in terms of the positions in the clause that can ellipt, and found that there exists no coordination position universally excluded as an ellipsis site in natural language. His cross-linguistic comparison of ellipsis sites in terms of clause position also revealed that the ellipsis type most frequently met with is D-ellipsis (i.e., ellipsis of the initial element in the following conjunct) and that there seems to exist no natural language excluding D as a possible locus of ellipsis. As for the other positions in a coordination, Sanders (1977) proposed a schema by virtue of which positions C (final element in the preceding conjunct) and E (medial element in the following conjunct) closely follow D-position in terms of likelihood to ellipt, being in turn followed by positions F (final element in the following conjunct), B (medial element in the preceding conjunct), and A (initial element in the preceding conjunct), respectively. The order in which the six elements have just been mentioned is indicative of their respective likelihood to ellipt (Greenbaum & Meyer, 1982; Sanders, 1977). Note that reference to the position in

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the clause of the ellipted element(s) is important, in that it can be used as a criterion in the classification of ellipses.

2.3.3.2. Coordination ellipsis restrictions

There exist three restrictions in the pathway of coordination ellipsis found across languages (van Oirsouw, 1987). The first restriction is that not all languages will obligatorily allow ellipsis in any position. For instance, B-ellipsis is not acceptable in quite a number of languages, English included (witness the ungrammaticality of *John [provided] the food, and Bill provided the drinks*). The second constraint is that the target and the antecedent have to occupy the same position in the clause. It is in the breach of this requirement that the questionable nature of *?In Math he had 800, and [he had] 710 in English* lies, in that the antecedent *he had* is clause-medial, while the ellipted *he had* occurs clause-initially. The third restriction lies in that any site that accepts both anaphoric ellipsis and cataphoric ellipsis either necessarily contains a verb or occurs clause-finally (van Oirsouw, 1987, pp.265-266). See, in this respect, the sentence *John must work harder, and Bill should [work harder], too*, where ellipsis of *work harder* is a valid option because it is verbal in nature. See also the sentence *John must [work harder], and Bill should, work harder*, where *work harder* is elliptable because it is both verbal and clause final.

2.3.3.3. Combinatory vs. segregatory coordination

Quirk *et al.* (1985) differentiate between two types of *and*-phrases – one expressing combinatory meaning, and one expressing segregatory meaning. Combinatory coordination involves reciprocal or symmetrical expressions. Reciprocal expressions include *be simi-*

lar, be different, fancy each other, and *make a couple,* as in *John and Mary make a happy couple.* Neither of the coordinates in a reciprocal expression can occur independently (see **John makes a happy couple*). Also, as emphasized by van Oirsouw (1987), symmetrical predicates may occur in *and*-coordination, but not in *or-* or *but*-coordination; hence the grammaticality of *John and Mary make a happy couple,* but not of **John or Mary makes a happy couple* and **John makes a happy couple, but Mary doesn't,* respectively.

In contrast, in a segregatory expression like *John and Mary know Mr. Black,* each of the conjuncts can occur on its own; hence the grammaticality of *John knows Mr. Black.* Moreover, segregatory expressions accept, not only *and-,* but also *or-* and *but-* coordination – see the grammatical acceptability of both *John or Mary knows Mr. Black* and *John knows Mr. Black, but Mary doesn't.*

Quirk *et al.* (1985) suggest that differentiation can be made between the two types of *and*-phrases by applying the *both*-test. Insertion of *both* is a grammatically valid move with segregatory *and,* but not with combinatory *and* (witness the grammaticality of *Both John and Mary know Mr. Black* as opposed to the ungrammaticality of **Both John and Mary make a happy couple*). Hence the conclusion that combinatory coordination is non-elliptical in nature, while segregatory coordination is the outcome of ellipsis (Quirk *et al.,* 1985, p.958).

Although Quirk *et al.* (1985) discuss the combinatory vs. segregatory distinction only in terms of noun phrases, the dichotomy seems to apply to verb phrases, as well. One argument in support of this claim is that the *both*-test not only works with noun phrase coordination but also with verb phrase coordination. It is the segregatory vs. combinatory nature of the verb phrase coordination that makes insertion of *both* possible in

the sentence *She both worked overtime and took good care of her kids*, but not in the sentence **She both tried and failed*.

2.3.3.4. Ellipses in terms of clause-position – a classification

The approach to coordination in terms of the positions of the elements in a conjunct is a valuable asset, in that it makes way for a possible classification of ellipses. More specifically, ellipses can be classified into clause-initial, clause-final, and clause-medial (Quirk et al., 1985). *Clause-initial* position (e.g., *You should have studied harder and [you should have] taken a good rest before the test*) means leaving out the initial element(s) in a clause. In English coordinated structures, clause-initial ellipsis necessarily denotes deletion of element D (i.e., of the clause-initial material in the following conjunct, as in the example above) – note that A-ellipsis (i.e., deletion of the initial material in the preceding conjunct) is not normally a valid option in written English discourse. However, A-ellipsis may occasionally occur in informal oral discourse – e.g., *[I] Thought you were sleeping and you wouldn't hear me sneak in. Clause-final* ellipsis entails dropping the final clause constituent(s). In coordination, final ellipsis means either omission of element C, i.e., the clause-final element in the preceding conjunct (e.g., *John hates [Geometry], and Bill is afraid of, Geometry*) or omission of element F, i.e., the final element in the following conjunct (e.g., *John's test score was high, and so was Bill's [test score]*). *Clause-medial* ellipsis in English coordination always translates as E-ellipsis, i.e., omission of the medial part of the following clause, as in *John provided the food, and Bill [provided] the drinks*. Note that, as mentioned above, English does not allow B-ellipsis.

Even though the clause position factor has been discussed only relative to coordination (Quirk et al., 1985; Sanders, 1977; van Oirsouw, 1987), it seems that it can also be

a valid criterion where the relationship between two clauses is of subordination, as well as where sentence fragments are involved. In relationships other than coordination, clause-initial ellipsis means leaving out an element that occurs initially in the clause, as is the case in the fragment *There was a small woman, too... And [there was] a little boy with a freckled face* (Bradbury, p.272), clause-final ellipsis entails dropping an element occurring last in the clause (e.g., *John's test score was considerably higher than Bill's [test score]*), while clause-medial ellipsis translates as leaving out an element which is neither initial nor final in the clause. Note, nevertheless, that English does not seem to accept clause-medial ellipsis in relationships other than coordination.

2.4. Morpho-syntax of the element(s) undergoing ellipsis

In languages like English, all the phrases making up a clause can undergo ellipsis. Not only noun phrases (e.g., *John scored three goals, and Bill scored two [goals]*) and verb phrases (e.g., *John left for school ten minutes ago, and Bill [left for school] five minutes ago*), but also adjective phrases (e.g., *John isn't good at sports, but Bill is [good at sports]*), adverb phrases (e.g., *John swam a lot last summer, but he hasn't swum much since [then]*), and prepositional phrases (e.g., *John isn't at home, but Bill is [at home]*) are subject to ellipsis. Note that some of these ellipses occur in initial position, some in medial position, and still others in final position in the clause. Note also that some are retrievable from the discourse, while others base their recoverability either in extralinguistic cues or in one's familiarity with the ways the language works.

Ellipses affecting the different phrases making up a clause can be total or partial. An ellipsis is *total* wherein a whole phrase is left out, as is the case with the second instance of the adjective clause *good at sports* or the prepositional phrase *at home* above. In

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contrast, an ellipsis is *partial* wherein only part of a phrase is affected by ellipsis, as is the case with the noun phrase *two [goals]* in the example above. Both these types of ellipsis are equally relevant to the present study, and any deletion of language material, whether total or partial, is coded as an instance of ellipsis.

In spite of the fact that all the phrases belonging to a clause are possible loci of ellipsis in English, the literature of the field mainly tackles ellipses of/within the noun phrase (henceforth, *nominal ellipses*) and ellipses of/within the verb phrase (henceforth, *verbal ellipses*). Sometimes what ellipts are, not mere phrases, but rather complexes of phrases, as in the case of the subject-and-verb complex in *He sent an e-mail message to his sister and [he sent] a telegram to his parents*. Such instances will be referred to as *complex ellipses* in the present study.

2.4.1. Nominal ellipsis

When not expressed by a pronoun, a nominal group is made up of a head noun denoting 'the thing' and a number of modifiers, which can occur either before 'the thing' or after it (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Nominal ellipsis translates as presupposing the thing, and it involves dropping the postmodifying element(s), if any, and upgrading one of the premodifiers of a noun to the status of noun head.

A nominal group that is elliptical is, more often than not, textual in nature (Quirk *et al.*, 1985). Moreover, it tends to be anaphoric, in that it presupposes a previous nominal group that is intact, as in *John scored three goals, and Bill scored two [goals]*. It should not be inferred, nevertheless, that nominal ellipses cannot be cataphoric – witness sentences like *John can't stand [Math], and Bill is afraid of, Math*.

On the other hand, the tendency for nominal ellipses to be textual in nature does not mean that nominal ellipses need to be textual. Sometimes, they can be situational, too. Such is the case in *[I/We] Told you so* and *[There] Won't be anything left for dinner* (Quirk *et al.*, 1985, pp.896-897). However, as may have been noticed from the examples above, situational ellipsis mainly occurs in conversation.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) claim that the element upgraded to the status of head is typically either a deictic (as is *some* in *Several children were reading, but some [children] were watching TV*) or a numerative (as is *two* in *John scored three goals and Bill scored two [goals]*). Epithets, such as *the weirdest* in *The jokes were not bad, but the weirdest [jokes] were yet to come*, are less frequent as heads of elliptical nominal groups. As for classifiers, such as *the silk* in *She vacillated about which blouse to wear, but eventually she made up her mind and put on the silk [blouse]*, they seem still less likely to be upgraded to the status of head, mainly because they are typically realized by nouns and it would not be clear to the addressee whether the noun at issue is an elliptical head or represents the thing itself. However, it should be noted that Halliday and Hasan (1976) base these assertions on intuition, rather than on statistics.

2.4.1.1. Subject ellipsis

Nominal ellipses are frequent in coordination, and particularly involve grammatical subjects representing old information. That the ellipted nominal element should be discourse-old is crucial, in that only old information is recoverable through inference (Givon, 1993). If the subject of the following conjunct is co-referential with the subject in the preceding conjunct, and therefore represents old information, it is prone to ellipt (Givon, 1993, p.329). Hence the grammaticality of *She lulled the baby a-bye and [she] left the*

room on tiptoes. In contrast, if the subject of the following conjunct is not co-referential with the subject in the preceding conjunct (e.g., *The baby fell asleep and [*the mother] left the room on tiptoes*), and therefore it does not, strictly speaking, represent old information, it cannot undergo ellipsis.

Givon (1993) accounts for subject ellipsis in terms of thematicality (i.e., topicality). With him, the more thematic the connection between a conjunct and the neighboring discourse is, the more likely ellipsis becomes. Contrastive conjunctions (e.g., *but, while, yet*) are strongly associated with subject switching. This is not the case with the non-contrastive conjunction *and*, nevertheless, which typically entails subject continuity; hence the tendency for subject ellipsis to be associated with *and* rather than with any of the contrastive conjunctions (Givon, 1993, pp.318-323).

The likelihood for ellipsis of a nominal functioning as subject to occur depends, not only on the discourse activeness of the said nominal, but also on the general acceptance of ellipsis in the language at issue. According to Bates and Devescovi (1989), pro-drop languages (e.g., Italian and Hungarian) are far more likely to yield subject-elliptical constructions in free-standing declaratives than are non-drop languages (e.g., English). Consequently, levels of subject ellipsis are considerably higher in Hungarian (18%) and Italian (12%) than they are in English (6%). Subject ellipsis in such languages is particularly obvious when it comes to pronouns, in that most pronominal subjects are prone to ellipt; hence the much smaller percentage of overtly present pronominal subjects in Italian and Hungarian (3% and 6% of the total number of subjects in the data under analysis, respectively) as compared with English, where pronominals represent 15% of the total number of overtly present subjects (Bates & Devescovi, 1989, p.234).

An almost similar situation has been found in Romanian, where overt presence of pronouns fulfilling the role of grammatical subject is also relatively scarce (see Myhill, 1986). When Romanian subject pronouns do appear in a clause, they are more often than not contrastive in function, and tend to occur in postverbal, rather than preverbal, position. Such is the case in

Știu că nu mă poți ajuta, și știi și tu asta

Know-1ˢᵗ-sg that not me can-2ⁿᵈ-sg help, and know-2ⁿᵈ-sg also you this

'I know that you can't help me, and you know it too' (Myhill, 1986, pp.335-340).

The tendency to drop subjects has been noticed in Spanish, as well (López, 1999). Like Italian, Hungarian, and Romanian, Spanish is a null-subject language, where overt presence of the subject is largely a matter of option on the part of the speaker/writer. Moreover, like in Romanian, overt presence of the pronominal subject typically denotes contrast (López, 1999, pp.265-266).

The increased potential for ambiguity resulting from subject ellipsis in Italian, Hungarian, Romanian, and Spanish is annihilated by the wealth of morphological markings displayed by the verb forms. As emphasized by Myhill (1992), overt presence of the subject is not a syntactic requirement of all languages, in that the subject is implied in the morphology of the verb (Myhill, 1992, p.22). As a result, even though Italian, Hungarian, Romanian, and Spanish grammatical subjects are oftentimes not overtly present, their number and person are easy to infer from the inflection of the verb. In contrast, no such message is carried by the English verb forms – with the noticeable exception of the morphologically rich verb *be* and the *-s* inflection of the third person singular form of simple

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present. As a result, whenever English subject ellipsis could lead to ambiguity, it is less likely to occur.

2.4.1.2. Object ellipsis

Ellipsis of/within a noun phrase can also translate as ellipsis of an object. As with any ellipsis, underlying object ellipsis is an antecedent readily available to both the speaker/writer and the listener/reader. According to Ito (1993), the antecedent of an omitted object can be a subject (e.g., *The peanut will remain slightly chewy. Serve [it] hot still in the shell*), a direct object, (e.g., *Place the rabbit on the grill and brown [it] well on all sides*), an indirect object (e.g., *Pour the Bourbon over, give the glass a twirl, but not a stir, and serve [it]*), an oblique object (e.g., *While the jars are hot, pack the relish in them and cover [them] with lids and rings*), or combinations thereof, as in *Fold the dry ingredients into the liquid and pour [them] into the greased cake pan* (Ito, 1993, p.77).

The fact that all the verbs above are in the imperative should not lead to the erroneous conclusion that object ellipsis is restricted to imperatives only. If there is a restriction in the pathway of object ellipsis, it is not that the verb left be in the imperative mood, but rather that the object be the highest grammatical function of the verb at issue (Ito, 1993). Such is the case in all the examples involving imperatives above, and also in the nonfinite *to sell* in the question/answer sequence *Why do you keep snakes? / To sell [them]* (Ito, 1993, pp.90-91). However, the issue of 'height' is difficult to understand, in that Ito (1993) neither explained what exactly determines it nor provided a scale. One can infer, nevertheless, by reading between the lines, that the 'highest function' requirement for objects is fulfilled once the subject has been ellipted – which makes one conclude, by

process of elimination, that the direct object is the second highest grammatical function of a verb, the first being, presumably, the subject.

Ito (1993) discussed the issue of omitted objects in the light of two possible interpretations. One interpretation is that the verbs at issue maintain their transitivity and therefore take an object – save that, in such instances, the object is null. The alternative is that there exist two forms assumed by transitivity, one *with* an object and one *without* an object (Ito, 1993, pp.84-85). No details are given about what 'transitivity without an object' means, nevertheless. Also, no borderline between transitivity with ellipted object and intransitivity is drawn. This makes the reader wonder why the fact that a verb normally occurring transitively might occasionally become contextually intransitive is overlooked.

Ito (1993) defined object ellipsis as an instance wherein "the first object of a verb that is ordinarily expected to be transitive can be omitted in a non-finite (imperative [sic] or infinitive) clause only if that verb's subject is not expressed on independent grounds" (Ito, 1993, p.92). This definition is highly questionable. Indeed, one cannot refrain from asking oneself whether the imperative is a nonfinite verb form, the way it is claimed.

In spite of the lack of specificity concerning the definition of "transitivity without an object" and the flaw in the categorization of the imperative as a nonfinite verb form, nevertheless, the Ito (1993) account is valid, in that it grasps and discusses the main circumstances under which object ellipsis will occur, emphasizing the importance of the issue of the 'height' of grammatical functions.

2.4.2. Verbal ellipsis

Insofar as verbal ellipses are concerned, differentiation can be made between instances where only the verb is affected by deletion and instances where the complement or part thereof ellipts along with the verb. In either case, further differentiation can be made in terms of the degree to which the identical element(s) ellipt(s), in that ellipsis can be total or partial. Total verbal ellipsis entails complete deletion of a verb or verb group containing an auxiliary (e.g., *John (has) provided the food, and Bill [(has) provided] the drinks*). In contrast, partial verbal ellipsis entails omission of part of a verb group necessarily involving an auxiliary, while the rest of the group remains intact (e.g., *John has studied for the test, but Bill hasn't [studied for the test]*). There exist three main types of ellipses affecting verb forms that are broadly discussed in the literature of the field. They are gapping, operator ellipsis, and main/lexical verb ellipsis, respectively.

2.4.2.1. Gapping

Gapping (e.g., *John provided the food, and Bill [provided] the drinks*) is an instance of total clause-medial verbal ellipsis, and it is normally restricted to structures coordinated by *and*, *or*, and *nor*. Ross (1970) defined gapping as a universal rule that necessarily involves the presence, somewhere in the verb phrase, of an unlike element, as is the case with *the drinks* in the example above, and viewed it as deletion of "indefinitely many occurrences of a repeated verb in a conjoined structure" (Ross, 1970, p.250).

Nevertheless, the fact that gapping is a universal rule does not mean that it can work whenever and wherever (Jackendoff, 1971). On the contrary, it can only work under the proviso of identity between the gapped verb and its antecedent, wherein identity refers to both the semantics and the morphology of the two verbs. For instance, the re-

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quirement concerning the semantics of the verbs at issue is met in *John had a cup of coffee, and Bill [had] a beer*; in such instances, gapping is a valid option. However, the requirement is not satisfied in **Mary made a cake, and Betty [made] a phone call*, where the type of physical activity entailed in *made a cake* is not present in *made a phone call*. The lack of semantic overlap between the two instances of *made* in the example above renders gapping impossible.

As noted above, morphological identity is also a must for gapping to work. For instance, gapping is impossible where the antecedent and the gapped verb carry different morphological information, as in **John got suntanned yesterday, and Bill [will get suntanned] tomorrow*. However, as mentioned earlier in this study, there is one instance wherein the morphology of the gapped verb does not carry over: it is the subject-verb agreement with simple present verb forms, as in *Fred prefers Mary and his parents [prefer] Jane* (Hudson, 1989, p.62). That is so because in gapping, as generally in ellipsis, number agreement tends to be overlooked.

Where the coordinated structures involve like auxiliaries, gapping will imply deletion, not only of the second occurrence of the main verb, but also of the second occurrence of the auxiliary (Jackendoff, 1971; Quirk *et al.*, 1985; Ross, 1970). Witness, in this respect, the grammaticality of *John is studying Math, and Bill [is studying] foreign languages*, as opposed to the ungrammaticality of **John is studying Math, and Bill is [studying] foreign languages*. In contrast, gapping does not allow unlike auxiliaries (Jackendoff, 1971; Quirk *et al.*, 1985; Ross, 1970; van Oirsouw, 1987); hence the acceptability of *John should give up smoking, and Bill [should give up] drinking*, as opposed to the unacceptability of **John should give up smoking, and Bill must [give up] drinking*).

Gapping does not only disallow unlike auxiliaries; it will not tolerate unlike pre-verbal adverbs, either. It is this restriction that accounts for the ungrammaticality of *John always complains about his unhappy childhood, and Bill seldom [complains] about his wife*. Note that the restriction at work in the sentence above does not translate as incompatibility between gapping and preverbal adverbs – witness the grammaticality of the sentence *John always complains about his unhappy childhood, and Bill [always complains] about his wife*. In other words, where the preverbal adverb in the second conjunct is identical with the one in the first conjunct, it ellipts along with the verb.

Gapping is not only affected by material preceding the verb. It can be affected by material following the verb, as well. In this respect, however, for the verb and its immediate complementation in a following conjunct to gap, there has to be at least one unlike element that is left (Jackendoff, 1971; Ross, 1970; van Oirsouw, 1987). Such is the time adverbial *for two hours* in *John studied for the test in Math for two weeks, and Bill [studied for the test in Math] for two hours*.

Another constraint involving gapping is that where there are unlike complexes of objects (i.e., an indirect object plus a direct object), gapping is out of the question. It is this constraint that blocks gapping in the sentence *John taught the tenth-graders Geometry, and Bill [taught] the eleventh-graders Trigonometry*. However, where the complement is made up of a noun phrase followed by a prepositional phrase, gapping becomes a valid option; hence the acceptability of *John taught Geometry to the tenth-graders, and Bill [taught] Trigonometry to the eleventh-graders*.

2.4.2.2. Operator ellipsis

Operator ellipsis involves deleting the operator while keeping the main verb intact. The term 'operator' denotes either *the* auxiliary (if there is only one) or *that* particular auxiliary (in a multi-auxiliary verb form) which occurs first and wants placing before the subject in interrogative structures, as does *may* in *He may have been being watched* (Quirk *et al.*, 1985). For example, the deletion of the second occurrence of *was* in *John was sitting in the armchair, and Bill [was] standing near the door* represents an instance of operator ellipsis.

Operator ellipsis resembles gapping in that it typically occurs in coordination, and also in that it also necessarily involves a verb occurring in clause-medial position. There is a basic difference between gapping and operator ellipsis, nevertheless. The difference at issue lies in that, whereas gapping involves total ellipsis and can only occur with fully identical verb forms, whether simple (i.e., made up of one word, as in *John provided the food, and Bill [provided] the drinks*) or complex (i.e., made up of an operator and a non-finite form of the main verb, as in *John was nominated for the Congress, and Bill [was nominated] for the Senate*), operator ellipsis necessarily involves complex verb forms exhibiting partial identity with their antecedents. Note that operator ellipsis will only occur where the operator is identical, while the main verb is not, as in *John was promoted, and Bill [was] fired.*

Operator ellipsis does not necessarily occur in clause-medial position. Sometimes, it occurs in clause-initial position, as well. Such is the case in interrogative structures such as, *[Does] Anybody need a lift?* (Quirk *et al.*, 1985, pp.898-899). There is a considerable difference between the two instances of operator ellipsis, nevertheless. The differ-

ence at issue has to do with retrievability: while clause-medial operator ellipsis is typically textual, clause-initial operator ellipsis is always situational in nature.

2.4.2.3. Main verb ellipsis

Main/Lexical verb ellipsis (sometimes referred to as verb phrase deletion in the literature of the field) entails deleting the main verb but leaving behind an auxiliary, as in *John is sleeping, but Bill isn't [sleeping]* (Jackendoff, 1971; van Oirsouw, 1987). This type of ellipsis seems to be an English-only rule, in that it has not been noted in other languages.

Main verb ellipsis has to be maximal. This means that it not only involves deletion of the main verb, but also deletion of all its complementation. In other words, all the material following the auxiliary must go, except the non-identical elements – mostly, adverbials – as in, *The girls won't stay out late, but Bill will [stay out late], as usual*).

There is a certain degree of similarity between gapping and main verb ellipsis, in that they both entail absolute identity of verb forms. In other words, the target verb phrase and the antecedent verb phrase need to be identical – see the gapping in *John provided the food, and Bill [provided] the drinks* and the main verb ellipsis *John isn't sleeping, but Bill is [sleeping]*. In addition, the grammatical subjects are not necessarily non-identical; hence, they do not ellipt in either – note that both in the instance of gapping and in the main verb ellipsis above, the subject in the following conjunct (*Bill*) is different from the subject in the preceding conjunct (*John*).

As seen above, both gapping and main verb ellipsis involve deletion of the main verb. There is a crucial difference between the two, nevertheless. The difference lies in that gapping involves total ellipsis, which means that no verb trace is left behind, whereas main verb ellipsis involves partial ellipsis only, which means that part of the verb

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(namely, the main verb) ellipts, while the rest (namely, the auxiliary) remains intact (Sag, 1976; van Oirsouw, 1987). Indeed, whereas gapping of *provided* in *John provided the food, and Bill [provided] the drinks* leaves the second conjunct altogether verbless, ellipsis of *sleeping* in *John isn't sleeping, but Bill is [sleeping]* does not bring about total verblessness in the second conjunct.

A second issue that differentiates between main verb ellipsis and gapping is the position in the clause of the ellipted element. Gapping is obligatorily a clause-medial phenomenon, as illustrated by *John provided the food, and Bill [provided] the drinks*; in contrast, main verb ellipsis can occur either clause-medially (e.g., *The girls won't stay out late, and Bill won't [stay out late], either*) or clause-finally (e.g., *John is sleeping, but Bill isn't [sleeping]*).

Another considerable distinction between main verb ellipsis and gapping has to do with the types of constructions wherein the two ellipsis types occur. Thus, whereas gapping is only found in coordination, main verb ellipsis will be met with in coordination and subordination alike. Moreover, where subordination is involved, ellipsis of the main verb may occur either in the subordinate clause (e.g., *No one has passed the exam unless John has [passed the exam]*) or in the main clause (e.g., *If John hasn't passed the exam, then no one has [passed the exam]*).

A further distinction to be found between the two categories of ellipsis is that, unlike gapping, which requires an antecedent in the preceding discourse, main verb ellipsis may occur, where subordination is involved, not only in following clauses, but also in preceding clauses; hence the acceptability of *If John hasn't [passed the exam], then no one has passed the exam* (Jackendoff, 1971).

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Main verb ellipsis is used as an alternative to either repetition of a long comple-mentation or PRO-form substitution (Greenbaum & Meyer, 1982). For instance, in the sentence *No one has solved the third Geometry problem unless John has*, repetition of the complementation will yield the questionable construction *?No one has solved the third Geometry problem unless John has solved the third Geometry problem*, whereas substitu-tion will translate as *No one has solved the third Geometry problem unless John has done it*. Note that, in either case, lack of ellipsis will bring about wordiness, thus contravening the "reduce as much as possible" maxim of Quirk *et al.* (1985); hence the preference for the elliptical construction to either repetition or substitution.

2.4.3. Complex ellipses

As may have been noticed in some of the instances of verbal ellipsis discussed above (e.g., *You should have studied harder and [you should have] taken a good rest before the test* and *No one has passed the exam unless John has [passed the exam]*, respectively), not all the instances involving verbal ellipsis relate to the verb only. Oftentimes, verbal ellipsis brings about deletion of other parts of speech, as well. In the present study, such instances are referred to as *complex ellipses*, and they are classified, in terms of the parts of speech that ellipt along with the verb, into four subcategories, namely: subject-and-verb ellipses, verb-and-object ellipses, whole-predicate ellipses, and subject-and-predicate ellipses.

2.4.3.1. Subject-and-verb ellipsis

More often than not, subject-and-verb ellipses involve coordinated structures. Note that such ellipses always occur in the following conjunct and are, as a rule, textual in nature.

However, subject-and-verb ellipses do not necessarily involve coordination. When occurring in structures other than coordination, subject-and-verb ellipses are always situational in nature.

Subject-and-verb ellipses occurring in coordination are sometimes referred to as 'conjunction reduction' (Jackendoff, 1971; Koutsoudas, 1971; van Oirsouw, 1987). However, not all the instances of conjunction reduction entail ellipsis of a subject and a verb – note that what is sometimes styled 'conjunction reduction' is an ellipsis phenomenon that can denote deletion of either the end of the preceding clause (e.g., *John seemed to be [in love], and Bill definitely was in love*) or the beginning of a following clause (*He sent an e-mail message to his sister and [he sent] a telegram to his parents*). Only the latter subtype involves a subject-and-verb complex; hence, only this subtype is of interest to this study. As a result, conjunction reduction will only be understood to denote ellipsis of clause-initial material in the following conjunct here.

Conjunction reduction can affect either the subject and the entire verb form (e.g., *He sent an e-mail message to his sister and [he sent] a telegram to his parents*) or the subject and part of the verb form, namely the operator (henceforth, *subject-and-operator* ellipsis). For example, there is subject-and-operator ellipsis involved in the sentence *He is dating Mary but [he is] dreaming of Linda*.

Conjunction reduction is occasionally hard – nay, almost impossible – to tell from gapping. Such is the case in *He told Mary about the party and his cousin about the football game*, where there exists (in theory, at least) a possible reading wherein the conjunct *his cousin about the football game* might be perceived as an instance of gapping (*and his cousin [told Mary] about the football game*), rather than one of conjunction reduction

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(and [he told] his cousin about the football game). However, as found in Greenbaum and

Meyer's (1982) study of the ways native speakers of English read ellipses, clause-initial

ellipsis (i.e., ellipsis of the subject and verb in the second conjunct; in other words, con-

junction reduction) tends to be favored over clause-medial ellipsis (i.e., ellipsis of verb

only; in other words, gapping). As emphasized in the Greenbaum and Meyer (1982)

study, most native speakers tend to interpret *his cousin* in the example above as object of

told, rather than as subject of it. It is only where semantics permits no conjunction reduc-

tion reading that native speakers will read an ellipsis-affected second conjunct as gap-

ping. For instance, the sentence *Sue baked a cake yesterday, and Sally today* will be read

as *Sue baked a cake yesterday, and Sally [baked a cake] today*, rather than as **Sue baked

a cake yesterday, and Sue [baked Sally] today* (Greenbaum & Meyer, 1982, p.144).

The occasional difficulty of telling gapping from conjunction reduction might

have been the underlying factor behind Koutsoudas' (1971) proposition that gapping and

conjunction reduction be collapsed into a single rule, for which he proposed the name

'Conjunction Deletion Rule.' The proposition that the two rules be collapsed into one was

also espoused by Givon (1993), who perceived conjunction reduction as a kind of gap-

ping – hence the label 'gapping' that he attached to the ellipsis of the second instance of

he gave in *He gave flowers to Mary and [he gave] candy to Cynthia.*

Moreover, van Oirsouw (1987) went even further, suggesting that all instances of

ellipsis involving coordination should be discussed under a unitary umbrella, for which

he proposed the name 'coordinate deletion.' This super-category would include gapping,

as in *John provided the food, and Bill [provided] the drinks*, main verb ellipsis, as in

John isn't sleeping, but Bill is [sleeping], and conjunction reduction, as in *He is dating*

Mary but [he is] dreaming of Linda. The reason at the core of Van Oirsouw's (1987) proposition seems to have been that all the types of ellipsis listed above serve one and the same purpose – that of reducing identical material involving a verb phrase in coordinated structures.

However, Koutsoudas (1971), Givon (1993), and van Oirsouw (1987) seem to have overlooked the fact that there are clearcut differences among the three phenomena at issue. The said differences lie in either the position in the clause of the element(s) undergoing ellipsis or the degree of deletion involved. Locus-wise, for instance, whereas gapping always involves clause-medial material and conjunction reduction always occupies clause-initial position, main verb ellipsis can occur either clause-medially or clause-finally. As for the degree of deletion, gapping translates as total ellipsis of the verb form (plus other elements along with it, occasionally), main verb ellipsis is always partial in nature, in that an operator is always left behind, while conjunction reduction can be either total or partial.

As mentioned above, where subject-and-verb ellipsis does not involve coordination, it is situational in nature. More often than not, the ellipted verb is an operator. In other words, subject-and-verb deletion will take the shape of subject-and-operator ellipsis. Such ellipsis can occur in declaratives, e.g., *[I'm] Coming*, and in interrogatives, e.g., *[Are you] Looking for someone?* alike (Quirk *et al.*, 1985, pp.897-899).

2.4.3.2. Verb-and-object ellipsis

As its very name suggests, verb-and-object ellipsis entails deletion of a verb and its object. The literature of the field does not focus on verb-and-object ellipsis in itself. However, given that it involves a verb, the issue of verb-and-object ellipsis is tackled, tangen-

tially, either in gapping, e.g., *John taught Geometry to the tenth-graders, and Bill [taught Geometry] to the eleventh-graders*, or in main verb ellipsis, e.g., *John has passed the exam, but Bill hasn't [passed the exam]*. As noted earlier in this study, complex verb-and-object ellipsis can be met with either in coordination (see the examples above) or in subordination (e.g., *No one has passed the exam unless John has [passed the exam]*). Moreover, in the latter case, it can affect either the subordinate clause, as is the case in the example above, or the main clause (as in *If John hasn't passed the exam, then no one has [passed the exam]*).

2.4.3.3. Whole-predicate ellipsis

At times, verbal ellipsis entails deletion of the entire predicate. Where ellipsis of the entire predicate occurs, the only part of the clause that is left behind is the subject (Quirk *et al.*, 1985). Whole-predicate ellipsis is only met with under certain circumstances, and it often involves comparative constructions (e.g., *Nigel finished the exam at the same time as George [finished it/the exam]*), coordinate constructions (e.g., *Nigel finished the exam first, then George [finished it/the exam]*), and one-word responses, as is the case in the question/answer sequence, *Who finished the exam first? / George [finished it/the exam first]*. Sometimes, the role of subject is fulfilled by a *wh*-word (*who* or *what*), as in *He told me something had happened while I was out, but he never said what [had happened]* (Quirk *et al.*, 1985, p.906).

2.4.3.4. Subject-and-predicate ellipsis

The literature of the field refers to instances of ellipsis following a *wh*-word such as the one above as 'sluicing.' Sometimes, sluicing denotes whole-predicate ellipsis (see

above). However, sluicing can be more than whole-predicate ellipsis, in that it can in-volve, not only deletion of the entire predicate, while leaving the subject intact, but also deletion of the subject, so long as the latter is not expressed by a *wh*-word (Ross, 1970). In the latter case, nothing is left behind, except for the *wh*-word functioning as marker of the locus of the ellipted subclause. Such is the case in *John had obviously met the man before, but the investigation failed to establish where/when/why [he had met him]*. In this sentence, a *wh*-word (*where, when,* or *why*) functions as complementizer, rather than as subject, of an empty clause. In such instances, sluicing affects subject-and-predicate complexes, in that everything ellipts except for the *wh*-complementizer.

Sluicing entails, therefore, a *wh*-word (*who, whom, which, when, where, why, how, how long*) functioning as complementizer. Other complementizers (e.g., *that, if/whether,* or *for*) are not compatible with sluicing (Lobeck, 1991, p.87); hence the un-grammaticality of **They had promised they would help us, but we didn't know whether/if.* Likewise, sluicing does not apply to *wh*-relatives (Quirk *et al.*, 1985, p.908); hence the unacceptability of **Someone has phoned, but I can't recall the name of the person who.*

2.4.4. Nominal vs. verbal vs. complex ellipses – a summary

The issue of nominal ellipsis can be approached in terms of the degree to which deletion operates (total or partial) and in terms of the grammatical role fulfilled by the noun phrase in the clause. The latter approach discriminates between noun phrases that can be affected by ellipsis and noun phrases that cannot. A noun phrase can undergo ellipsis when it functions as subject (e.g., *He jumped into his car and [he] peeled off in a cloud of dust*) or as object (e.g., *Place the rabbit on the grill and brown [it] well on all sides*). In

contrast, a noun phrase cannot normally undergo ellipsis when used adverbially (e.g., *?She drove her Toyota with care, and he sped his Mustang without [care]*).

There are two ways whereby a verb phrase can be affected by ellipsis. One involves the verb form only, while the other involves the verb form plus something else. Note that in either case, differentiation can be made between total ellipsis and partial ellipsis. Where only the verb form is affected by ellipsis, total ellipsis equates with complete deletion of the verb form, as in *John provided the food, and Bill [provided] the drinks*. In contrast, partial verbal ellipsis translates as deletion of part of a verb group necessarily involving an auxiliary. Further differentiation is possible here between operator ellipsis, where only the operator is left out (e.g., *John was promoted, and Bill [was] fired*), and main verb ellipsis, where the main verb ellipts but the operator does not (e.g., *John isn't sleeping, but Bill is [sleeping]*).

Where deletion affects, not only the verb from, but also some other part(s) of the clause, ellipsis is labeled as complex. In terms of the clause element(s) ellipting along with the verb form, complex ellipses can be subclassified into ellipses of subject and verb, ellipses of verb and object, ellipses of the entire predicate, and ellipses of the subject and the predicate. Insofar as subject-and-verb ellipses are concerned, differentiation can (again) be made between instances where the verb undergoes total ellipsis, as in *He sent an e-mail message to his sister and [he sent] a telegram to his parents*, and instances where the verbal ellipsis is partial, in that the operator ellipts along with the subject but the main verb is kept, as in *He is dating Mary but [he is] dreaming of Linda*. Ellipses of verb and object, as in *John taught Geometry to the tenth-graders, and Bill [taught Geometry] to the eleventh-graders*, translate as deletion of a verb and its object. Occasion-

ally, ellipsis involves the verb and its entire complementation, and all that remains of the clause is the subject (e.g., *Nigel finished the exam at the same time as George [finished it/the exam]*). Such instances are called whole-predicate ellipses. Moreover, ellipsis can sometimes affect both the subject and the predicate. If so, nothing is left behind, except for a complementizer whose function is to mark the locus of the ellipted subclause (e.g., *John had obviously met the man before, but the investigation failed to establish where/when/why [he had met him]*). Such instances can be referred to as subject-and-predicate ellipses.

2.5. Ellipsis – a summary

Instances of ellipsis can be classified in terms of the degree to which deletion operates. Where ellipsis affects part of the clause element at issue, while keeping part of it intact, it is labeled as *partial*. In contrast, where ellipsis means complete deletion of a clause element, it is called *total*.

The major types of ellipses are classifiable in terms of three criteria. The three criteria are as follows: position in the clause of the element(s) subject to deletion, retrievability of the left-out element(s), and morpho-syntax of the elleted element(s). Insofar as the position in the clause of the ellipted element is concerned, differentiation can be made among three subclasses. First, ellipsis can affect the initial part of a clause. If so, it is called *clause-initial*. Second, ellipsis can affect the final element(s) in a clause, in which case it will be labeled as *clause-final*. Third, ellipsis can operate on a medial segment of a clause. If so, it will be called *clause-medial*.

In terms of retrievability, ellipses can be classified into textual, situational, and structural. *Textual* ellipses entail recoverability within the discourse itself. Where re-

trieval of the ellipted element(s) is achieved in the preceding discourse, ellipsis is *ana-phoric*. On the other hand, where retrieval of the ellipted element(s) is based in the following discourse, ellipsis is *cataphoric*. In contrast to textual ellipses, *situational* ellipses base their recoverability in the extralinguistic context. As for *structural* ellipses, they differ from both textual and situational ellipses, in that their retrievability lies, not in the context (whether linguistic or extralinguistic) of the act of communication, but in the familiarity with the ways language works of the participants in it.

Finally, in terms of the *morpho-syntax* of the ellipted element(s), ellipses can affect (in languages such as English, at least) any phrase making up a clause, including the noun phrase and the verb phrase. Ellipses affecting noun phrases (*nominal ellipses*) can be subclassified – in terms of the syntactic function fulfilled in the clause by the left-out element – into *subject ellipses* (i.e., ellipses of/within noun phrases functioning as grammatical subjects) and *object ellipses* (wherein the noun phrases affected by ellipsis function as objects, whether of a verb or of a preposition).

Ellipses affecting verb forms (*verbal ellipses*) can in turn be subclassified in terms of whether the entire verb group is affected (*gapping*) or only part of it. In the latter case, subdivision is possible in terms of whether the ellipted element is an operator (*operator ellipsis*) or a main verb (*main verb ellipsis*). Where verbal ellipsis occurs, subcategorization is also possible in terms of whether ellipsis affects the verb form only or whether some other clause element (namely, the subject and/or (part of) the complementation) ellipts along with the verb. In the latter case, ellipsis can be labeled as *complex*. Note that for an instance of ellipsis to be complex, it needs to affect the verb form and also some other clause element.

Complex ellipses can be subclassified into *subject-and-verb ellipsis, verb-and-object ellipsis, whole-predicate ellipsis,* and *subject-and-predicate ellipsis.* Subject-and-verb ellipsis translates as deletion of the noun phrase/group fulfilling the role of subject and of the verb group. A special subclass within subject-and-verb ellipsis is the one called *subject-and-operator ellipsis,* which denotes deletion of the noun phrase functioning as grammatical subject and the operator. Whereas verb-and-object ellipsis denotes deletion of the verb and its object(s), whole-predicate ellipsis entails deletion of the entire predicate (i.e., the verb and all its complementation) – which means that nothing is left of a clause except the subject. As for subject-and-predicate ellipsis, which can only occur after *wh*-words (*who, whom, which, when, where, why, how, how long*) functioning as complementizers, it refers to the instances of ellipsis wherein the entire complement clause is dropped, except for the complementizer, which is left behind to mark the locus of the left-out clause.

2.6. Rationale of this study

In spite of the fact that the issue of ellipsis has been discussed amply and approached from a diversity of angles, relatively few studies (Fukushima, 1999; López, 1999; Placencia, 1995; van Oirsouw, 1987) have taken interest in ellipsis across languages. Also, based on the material accessible and/or available in the United States, it seems that, with the exception of the pronoun subject omission issue mentioned tangentially in Myhill (1986), the different types of ellipses occurring in the Romanian language have not been paid any interest. Last, but not least, it seems that with a few notable exceptions (e.g., Meyer, 1995), most of the linguists tackling ellipses prefer to generate their own exam-

ples to illustrate their point, rather than rely on samples of ellipsis taken from real discourse.

In an attempt to make up for these drawbacks, the present study undertakes a cross-linguistic study of nominal, verbal, and complex ellipses occurring in English and Romanian. The main reason behind this study was to establish the similarities and dissimilarities existing between the two languages in terms of the position and retrieval of nominal, verbal, and complex ellipses occurring in two specific types of written discourse, namely short fiction and newspaper style.

Details about how the study was undertaken are provided in Chapter 3.

Chapter III

Methods

The present thesis is meant to be a cross-linguistic study of ellipsis usage in English and Romanian. More specifically, the study is meant to reveal whether (and, in the event of a positive answer, to establish to what extent) the two languages under discussion are comparable in terms of subtypes of nominal, verbal, and complex ellipses occurring in two specific written genres, namely short fiction and newspaper style.

3.1. Data selection

The reasons why I chose to analyze written discourse (as reflected in two distinct genres, namely literary genre and newspaper genre), rather than oral, are both objective and subjective. The objective dimension lies in the relative scarcity of speakers of Romanian in the United States and the immense difficulty of gathering naturally occurring discourse samples following from this scarcity. As for the subjective reason behind my choice, it is rooted in my preference for written discourse.

However, the discourse samples I analyzed carry an aura of orality, as well. Indeed, part of my data pertains to fiction – a genre which encompasses, not only the features of written discourse, perceptible mainly in the more descriptive and narrative parts, but also some of the features of oral discourse, to be found especially in the dialogues.

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The question, "Why literature?" has a relatively simple answer: Because I have always been fascinated with the two-pronged nature of literature. Literature represents, at one and the same time, a mirror and an open door. It mirrors life, but it also is a door open onto query and investigation and "an opportunity to emerge beyond one's self through another's eyes and live as someone else" (Kennedy & Gioia, 1995, dustcover). This dual nature of literature helps us understand the workings of the human mind and soul. At the same time, literature is a means of conveying the tale of life. It unfolds the story of the human being, and it reveals the human soul and spirit "capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance" (Faulkner, 1995, p.575).

Moreover, literature also develops sensitivity to language. It is through language that the story is told, and I find it worthwhile studying to what extent the language is a tool for relating the story and to what extent it is a molder of the story itself. Mostly, however, I chose to partly focus on literature because I found it hard to resist the temptation of marrying two lifetime passions – the love of language and the intricate ways it works, on the one hand, and the lure of literature, on the other.

Another question that may arise is, "Why the newspaper genre?" This question will find its answer in that, just like literature, newspaper articles are a means of conveying a story, of depicting a moment, of carrying "the stories and images of our day" (Bell, 1991, p.2).

Of the various subgenres existing within the literary genre, I chose to focus on the short story. which is a "kind of creative vision" – an attempt to capture the "ultimate reality" by aiming at it as "a discrete moment of truth... [rather than] *the* moment of truth" (Gordimer, 1995, pp.576-577). I am of the opinion that what happens to the mind and to

the language in this particularly intense and significant moment is of extreme interest to reader and discourse analyst alike.

There were several reasons behind my choice of the short story, the most important of them being that I felt that my findings would gain in accuracy if based on unitary language material, i.e., on whole stretches of written discourse, comprising an introduction, a body, and a conclusion, rather than on bits of unrelated written discourse taken from here and there.

I also felt that using writings belonging to different writers would be more appropriate than relying on writings produced by one and the same person. Fundamental in reaching this decision were my awareness that usage and/or non-usage of ellipsis could, to a certain extent, be a matter of personal taste, on the one hand, and my conviction that an elliptical construction is, more often than not, one of several options of conveying meaning through language, on the other. Given these, I decided that two ten-to-twelve-page-long stories belonging to different authors in each of the two languages under analysis would yield enough data for my cross-linguistic analysis of literary discourse.

Finally, I considered that the theme of the story might also have an impact on style, putting (along with the personality of the author) its imprint on it – and possibly reflecting in my findings. That was what made me conclude that it would be most beneficial to my study if I focused on short stories and newspaper articles tackling like topics, or even one and the same topic.

3.2. Data collection and description

With all these considerations in mind, I set out establishing the four short stories to analyze – two per language. First, I made up my mind concerning the two Romanian short

stories to focus on, namely Mircea Eliade's *Douăsprezece mii de capete de vită* (translated into English as 'Twelve Thousand Head of Cattle') and Mihai Niculescu's *Cizmarul din Hydra* (translated into English as 'The Cobbler of Hydra'). In part, my choice was determined by the fact that the two short stories befitted my pre-established parameters relative to length, style, and theme, as outlined above. Indeed, they are both 12-page-long stories, they both carry a heavy load of supernatural elements, and there is a unifying common denominator about them in terms of theme – note that they both deal with the issue of death, whether it means physical death, as in Niculescu's story, or death of trust and/or hope, as is the case in the Eliade story.

Once I had picked the two Romanian stories, I set out selecting matching short stories written in English. After a long and strenuous screening, I eventually opted for Ray Bradbury's ten-page story *The Crowd*, which I found was a perfect counterpart to Niculescu's story (note that it also revolves around the theme of death, and it is as heavily imbued with supernatural elements as is the latter) and John Steinbeck's eleven-page story *The Chrysanthemums* – a possible match, even though not a perfect one, to the Eliade story (note that, at one and the same time, the Steinbeck story and the Eliade story converge, in that they both address the issues of loss of confidence and/or betrayed expectations, but also diverge, in that the supernatural element, overtly present in Eliade, does not find its way into Steinbeck's story.

The short stories selected for analysis provided me with a corpus of 8,703 words in Romanian and 7,480 in English, respectively (see *Table 1* below). I considered that the discrepancy in terms of lengths of texts between the languages – as may have been noticed, the Romanian short stories outweigh the English ones by a ratio of 7 to 6

$(8,703 \div 7,480 = 1.16$, i.e., about 7/6) – would not impede my findings. This opinion was based on the fact that I was not so much interested in the quantification of instances of ellipsis as I was in the incidence of ellipsis, and particularly in the types of ellipsis used, in the two languages.

Author	Title	Number of words	Words per language
Bradbury, Ray	*The Crowd*	3,274	
Steinbeck, John	*The Chrysanthemums*	4,206	7,480
Eliade, Mircea	*Douăsprezece mii de capete de vită*	4,055	
Niculescu, Mihai	*Cizmarul din Hydra*	4,648	8,703

Table 1. Short stories under analysis in terms of numbers of words

The other object of my research was the newspaper genre. One of the reasons determining my choice was the wide availability of newspapers on the Internet – a factor of crucial importance when it comes to Romanian papers, which do not otherwise rejoice at circulation abroad.

As in the case of short stories, I hoped that the reliability of my findings would be enhanced if the newspaper articles under analysis revolved around identical issues. I took the opportunity offered to me by the millennium's last presidential elections in the United States (November 7, 2000) and Romania (November 26, 2000), respectively, and I decided to only focus on newspaper articles addressing these two events. I hoped that by analyzing articles tackling similar events I would give my findings more transcultural and cross-linguistic weight. Foreseeing, nevertheless, the probability that home affairs would be described in more detail than events occurring elsewhere, I decided to have the bulk of my data in each of the languages relate the home elections, rather than the overseas ones.

At the same time, with a view to broadening my pool, I opined that it would bene-fit my study if I gathered my data from several sources, trying to avoid, inasmuch as pos-sible, relying on texts taken from one source only – and especially texts produced by one and the same writer. Hence my decision to use articles from several newspapers. I also tried to enhance the diversity of the language analyzed by resorting to a wide spectrum of newspapers, both more traditional ones (e.g., *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* for English, *Adevărul* and *România Liberă* for Romanian) and tabloids – *The New York Post*, on the one hand, and *Evenimentul zilei* and *Ziua*, on the other. The decision to resort to the two kinds of newspapers mentioned above was rooted in my assumption that the differences in the expectations of the targeted audience may have an impact on the style adopted by the newspaper. Indeed, while more traditional newspapers like *Adevărul* and *România Liberă* seem to mainly address readers with a certain level of education (and hence with certain standards of stylistic expectations), tabloids like *Evenimentul zilei* and *Ziua* mainly target less educated readers; hence the focus of such papers on trivia, which shows both in the content of the articles and in the style adopted. As in the case of the short stories, I hoped that the diversity of text sources would diminish, not only the probability, but also the possibility that my findings mirror a person's own style of writ-ing, rather than a general tendency existing in the written discourse particular to the lan-guages under study.

Last, but not least, given the fact that a newspaper's main reason for existing lies, first and foremost, in imparting the news, I considered that the novelty issue should be-come one of the criteria on the basis of which the selection of newspaper corpora should

take place; hence my decision that all the newspaper texts analyzed should have appeared no later than 48 hours after the event depicted in them.

Keeping in mind the criteria outlined above, I set out downloading newspaper articles from the World Wide Web. Intuiting that newspaper articles would be less rich in ellipses than literary narratives, I decided to collect a larger corpus of newspaper data, one that amounted to 14-15,000 words per language. As a result, I ended up analyzing a corpus of American newspaper style samples totaling 14,508 words, of which 11,371 reflected the presidential elections in the United States and 3,137 the race for presidency in Romania, and a corpus of Romanian newspaper articles made up of 14,342 words, of which 3,027 covered the presidential ballot-casting in the U.S. and the remaining 11,315 tackled the November 26, 2000 presidentials in Romania. For a better grasp of the data, see *Table 2* below.

Elections Papers	The United States	Romania	Total
Words in American papers	11,371	3,137	14,508
Words in Romanian papers	3,027	11,315	14,342
Total	14,398	14,452	28,850

Table 2. Newspaper texts under analysis in terms of numbers of words

All in all, the race for the Oval Office was addressed in 14 articles (11 in American papers and 3 in Romanian papers) totaling 14,398 words (11,371 and 3,027, respectively), while the presidential race in Romania was covered in 16 articles (6 of which appeared in American newspapers and 10 in Romanian papers) totaling 14,452 words (3,137 and 11,315, respectively). Note that, with one exception (namely, *România Liberă*, from which only articles covering the presidential ballot-casting in Romania were

downloaded), the newspapers under study covered both the presidential elections. Note also that, whereas I managed to gather fairly balanced numbers of words covering the U.S. presidential elections in the newspapers under discussion, the numbers of words covering the presidentials in Romania taken from the different sources were quite unbalanced. However, I do not think that this lack of balance has impacted my findings.

For numerical details concerning the newspaper corpus (e.g., number of articles analyzed in each of the newspapers and total number of words in the languages under study, as well the degree of coverage of the two political events), see *Table 3* below.

Names of newspapers	Elections in the U.S.		Elections in Romania		Total	
	Articles	No of words	Articles	No of words	Articles	No of words
The New York Post	5	3,385	1	542	6	3,927
The New York Times	4	3,890	4	2,019	8	5,909
The Washington Post	2	4,096	1	576	3	4,672
Adevărul	1	915	3	5,652	4	6,567
Evenimentul zilei	1	990	2	1,554	3	2,544
România Liberă	–	–	3	2,082	3	2,082
Ziua	1	1,122	2	2,027	3	3,149
Total	14	14,398	16	14,452	30	28,850

Table 3. Presidential elections reflected in the newspaper texts – a numerical report

All the articles taken from newspapers were assigned shortened names (e.g., *The New York Times* became *NYT*), an initial capital letter (*A* or *R*) indicating which of the two presidential elections the article addressed (the ones held in the United States or those held in Romania, respectively), and a two-digit identification number. For details concerning the authors and headlines of the articles under analysis, as well as their dates of publication, see *Appendix*.

I deemed that the two corpora under analysis (see *Table 4* below), amounting to 21,988 words in the English texts (7,480 pertaining to the two short stories and 14,508 to the newspaper articles) and 23,045 words in the Romanian texts (8,703 in the short fiction samples and 14,342 in the newspaper data, respectively) were large enough to yield credible preliminary findings.

Language	Words in short stories	Words in newspapers	Word total
English	7,480	14,508	21,988
Romanian	8,703	14,342	23,045
Total	16,183	28,850	45,033

Table 4. Corpora under study in terms of total numbers of words

At the same time, I opined that the corpora were fairly balanced, in that the Romanian corpus only outweighed, numerically speaking, the English corpus by a ratio of ca. 26 to 25 (23,045÷21,988=1.048); note that this lack of perfect overlap in terms of lengths is actually representative of the texts themselves, since the Romanian texts tend to be longer than the English ones.

Note should be made here that it was by no means within the scope of this study to contrast genres in terms of frequency of occurrence of ellipses therein. Rather, what the study aimed at was to contrast languages; hence the lack of any discussion of ellipsis usage that may have been noted across genres. The decision to resort to texts belonging to two genres, rather than one, lay in the desire to cover a larger spectrum of written discourse.

3.3. Taxonomy

The instances of ellipses identified in the two corpora were categorized in terms of three criteria. The three criteria were the morpho-syntax of the ellipted element(s), the locus of ellipsis, and the retrievability of ellipsis, respectively.

3.3.1. Morpho-syntax

The prime criterion in terms of which of ellipsis coding was done in the present study was the morpho-syntax of the ellipsis-affected element(s). Only three subtypes of ellipses were relevant to the study, namely nominal ellipses, verbal ellipses, and complex ellipses.

As mentioned earlier in this study, no differentiation was made between instances of total ellipsis and instances of partial ellipsis. What was important for this research was when and where ellipsis occurred, rather than whether it affected a whole phrase or only part of it. As a result, the term ellipsis referred to all the instances of deletion involving a clause element (whether nominal or verbal), irrespective of whether the deletion was total or partial – i.e., irrespective of whether it denoted complete deletion or whether it affected part of a clause element while leaving some other part(s) intact. Note that throughout this study the bracketed element(s) in the examples did not appear in the original; rather, it/they represent(s) the item(s) assumed by the researcher to have undergone ellipsis. Note also that both the antecedent and the ellipsis target are italicized.

Sentences [3.1] and [3.2] below are meant to exemplify instances of total ellipsis, while sentences [3.3] and [3.4] are illustrative of partial ellipsis.

[3.1]   With her trowel *she* turned the soil over and over, and [*she*] smoothed it and [*she*] patted it firm (Steinbeck, p.207).

[3.2]   A Brentwood accident *will bring out* one group. A Huntington Park [*will bring out*] another (Bradbury, p.277).

[3.3]   In the House, Democrats have picked up at least one *seat*, and possibly *two more* [*seats*] (WP.A01, p.3 of 7).

[3.4]   Mr. Nader's once-stellar reputation among liberals *has been* permanently *tarnished*, his ability to raise money and to work with Democrats [*has been*] forever *damaged* (NYT.A04, p.2 of 4).

Whereas in [3.1] and [3.2] above ellipsis is total, in that a clause element (the nominal *she* and the verbal *will bring out*, respectively) has been left out altogether, sentences [3.3] and [3.4] illustrate partial ellipsis, in that both the bracketed nominal element *seats* and the verbal element *has been* have been left out, while the italicized but not bracketed *two more* and *damaged* have been preserved. Whether total or partial, ellipsis is at play in [3.1] through [3.4] above, and it was coded and counted as such.

As may have been noticed, example [3.2] carries, not only total ellipsis of the verb form *will bring out*, but also partial ellipsis of the subject – which would, unless affected by ellipsis, probably have read *a Huntington Park accident/one*. With a view to simplifying the labeling process, I decided to code such instances of ellipsis in terms of the element undergoing total ellipsis; hence the label 'verbal ellipsis' assigned to them.

Ellipses were categorized as nominal if deletion affected only a noun phrase/group, as in example [3.5] below.

[3.5]   *Congressional* [*candidates*] and *presidential candidates* alike did their best to

skitter toward the center (NYT.A01, p.3 of 4).

Ellipses were classified as verbal where the only clause element affected by dele-

tion was the verb group, as in example [3.2] above. Finally, ellipses were labeled as com-

plex if the deletion affected two or more clause elements (one of which was necessarily

the verb group), as in examples [3.6] and [3.7] below.

[3.6]   *We'll go* in town about five and [*we'll*] *have* dinner at the Cominos Hotel (Stein-

beck, p.207).

[3.7]   Most people just ruin scissors trying *to sharpen 'em,* but I know *how* [*to sharpen*

'em] (Steinbeck, p.209).

Syntax-wise, nominal ellipses were subdivided into ellipses of/within grammati-

cal *subjects*, as in [3.8] below, and ellipses of/within grammatical *objects*, as in [3.9] be-

low.

[3.8]   *I* mend pots and [*I*] sharpen knives and scissors (Steinbeck, p.209).

[3.9]   They'd come from *the immediate* [*world*] and *the accident-shocked world*

(Bradbury, p.272).

With verbal ellipses, three subcategories were differentiated initially. One of the

subtypes in the initial subcategorization involved instances where only the operator (or

the operator and some other auxiliary/-ies) in a complex verb group underwent ellipsis,

while the main verb was left intact (*operator* ellipses) – see [3.10] below.

[3.10] Mr. Nader's once-stellar reputation among liberals *has been* permanently *tar-nished*, his ability to raise money and to work with Democrats [*has been*] forever *damaged* (NYT.A04, p.2 of 4).

The second verbal ellipsis subtype involved instances where the main verb was left out, but an operator was left behind as a marker of the ellipsis site (*main verb* ellip-ses), as in [3.11] below.

[3.11] I *don't know,* I really *don't* [*know*] (Bradbury, p.276).

Both [3.10] and [3.11] above are instances of partial verbal ellipsis. Note that unlike partial nominal ellipses, which were not formally distinguished from total ones (and hence were not coded as distinct subcategories), partial verbal ellipses fell into dis-tinct subcategories of verbal ellipsis which were, given the verb form left behind, differ-entiated both from the instances of total verbal ellipsis and from each other.

The third subcategory in the initial inventory of verbal ellipses involved instances where the whole verb group ellipted, thus leaving an otherwise complete clause verbless (see [3.2] above). The site of the ellipted verb group was made easy to notice by the overt presence in the clause of both the grammatical subject and the object/adverbial following the left-out verb. Such instances are generally referred to as *gapping* in the literature; hence my decision to use this label, as well.

In coding the verbal ellipses in the texts under analysis in terms of the three sub-categories outlined above, it became obvious that none of the subtypes in the initial in-ventory offered an appropriate label for quite a number of verbal ellipses in the Romanian texts. All these unlabeled ellipses denoted existence. As a result, a new subcategory was

created, and it was labeled 'existential' – where existential ellipsis was defined as the verbal ellipsis subtype involving ellipsis of an existential verb. I decided to place all the ellipses of verbs denoting existence, including those that would also accept coding as gapping, into this subcategory.

It should be noted here that the newly-created category applied to Romanian, but not to English. For an illustration of an existential ellipsis, see [3.12] below, found in one of the Romanian texts under analysis.

[3.12] Nu *era* nici o veselie. [*Erau*] Feţe lungi, discuţii pe bisericuţe, într-o cameră
        strâmtă de la etajul doi al sediului (Adev.R03, p.3 of 7)
        Not *was* not one rejoicing. [*Were*] Faces long, discussions on small-groups, in-a
        room small from floor-the two of headquarters-the-of
        'There was no rejoicing. Long faces, small group small talk, in a small room on
        the second floor of the headquarters.'

The complex ellipses isolated in the texts were placed, in terms of the element ellipting along with the verb form, into one of four subclasses, namely: subject-and-verb ellipses, verb-and-object ellipses, whole-predicate ellipses, and subject-and-predicate ellipses.

The label *subject-and-verb* ellipsis was assigned to those instances of ellipsis wherein the elements undergoing deletion were the subject and the verb, as in [3.13].

[3.13] Through the windows *he saw* the crowd looking in. [*He saw*] That crowd that always came so fast, so strangely fast (Bradbury, p.272).

Sometimes only part of the verb group, namely the operator, was affected by ellipsis. Such instances were labeled as *subject-and-operator* ellipses, and are illustrated by example [3.6] above.

A further subcategory of subject-and-verb complex ellipsis was created to parallel the subcategory involving ellipsis of an existential verb. This subcategory involved an existential verb ellipting along with its subject; hence the label *subject-and-existential* ellipsis assigned onto it. Note that whereas ellipsis of an existential verb was only identified in the Romanian texts (see above), ellipsis of a complex made up of a subject and an existential verb was only found in the English texts. This type of complex ellipsis is illustrated in [3.14].

[3.14] Somewhere – [*there was*] a siren. The ambulance was coming (Bradbury, p.279).

Verb-and-object ellipses were those analyzed as deleting a verb form and an object, as in [3.15] below.

[3.15] "No! Don't *move me!*"

"We'll move him," said the voice casually.

"You idiots, you'll kill me, *don't* [*move me*]! " (Bradbury, p.278)

Whole-predicate ellipses entail deleting the verb and its entire complementation, the only clause-element left behind being the subject. Sentence [3.16] below is meant to exemplify such an instance of ellipsis.

[3.16] When voters were asked which candidate *shared their view of government*, about a third said Mr. Gore [*shared their view of government/did*], about a third said Mr.

Bush [*shared their view of government/did*], and the rest said both [*shared their view of government/did*] or neither [*shared their view of government/did*] (NYT.A01, p.3 of 4).

The final label used in the subcategorization of complex ellipses – *subject-and-predicate* – was used with reference to instances of ellipsis denoting deletion of the subject and the entire predicate, wherein the locus of the deletion was marked by a left-over complementizer. Such instances of ellipsis are commonly referred to as sluicing in the literature of the field. For an illustration of a subject-and-predicate complex ellipsis, see example [3.17].

[3.17] They always gather. And people, like you and I, have wondered from year after year, why *they gathered so quickly*, and *how* [*they gathered so quickly*] (Bradbury, p.277).

3.3.2. Locus of ellipsis

One criterion in terms of which nominal, verbal and complex ellipses were coded in this study was the locus in the clause of the ellipted element (Greenbaum & Meyer, 1982; Quirk *et al.*, 1985; Sanders, 1977; van Oirsouw, 1987). By virtue of this criterion, differentiation was made among *clause-initial* ellipsis, i.e., ellipsis of an element (or elements) that occur(s) initially in the clause, as in examples [3.8] and [3.13] above, *clause-final* ellipsis, i.e., ellipsis of an element (or elements) occurring last in the clause, as in [3.15] and [3.17] above, and *clause-medial* ellipsis, i.e., ellipsis of an element (or elements) that is/are neither first nor last in the clause, as in [3.2] and [3.10] above.

3.3.3. Retrievability of ellipsis

Another criterion whereby the coding of nominal, verbal, and complex ellipses was achieved was retrievability (Cairns, 1989; Carter & McCarthy, 1995; Dalrymple *et al.*, 1991; Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Lobeck, 1988; Quirk *et al.*, 1985; Thomas, 1987; van Oirsouw, 1987). In terms of this criterion, the instances of ellipsis identified as nominal, verbal, or complex found in the texts under analysis were labeled as either textual or situational. The third possible subtype of ellipsis, recovery-wise – namely, structural ellipsis – was not considered in this study.

That structural ellipses were not taken into account in the present study is accounted for by two reasons. One of the said reasons has to do with the lack of structural ellipsis in Romanian – the few instances of ellipsis encountered in the Romanian texts under analysis wherein recovery might at first sight seem to lie in one's knowledge of the structure of the language were never purely and entirely structural in nature, in that a closer scrutiny of the neighboring discourse revealed that recovery thereof was text-, rather than structure-, based; hence the label 'textual' assigned to ellipses such as that of *cum* 'how' in example [3.18].

[3.18] [Gore] urmărea cu interes mişcările cîrciumarului. [*El*] Îl văzu *cum* [*el*] îşi alege
un pahar de sub tejghea, şi [*cum (el)*] îl clăteşte mult, cu grijă (Eliade, p.12)
[Gore] was-following with interest movements-the innkeeper-the-of. [*He*] Him
saw *how* [*he*] REFL chooses a glass from under counter-the, and [*how (he)*] it
rinses much, with care
'[Gore] was following the innkeeper's movements with interst. He saw him
choose a glass from under the bar and clean it carefully' (Eliade, p.13).

In example [3.18] above, the second occurrence of the complementizer *cum* 'how' was ellipted along with the pronoun *el* 'he' functioning as subject of the subordinate clause. However, given its overt presence in the preceding clause, retrieval of the complementizer is textually-, rather than structurally-, based. Actually, had it not been for the overtly present first occurrence, ellipsis of the second occurrence of *cum* 'how' would not have been possible. Such instances of ellipsis are quite unlike complementizer ellipsis in English, which is typically purely structural in nature. Given that, I coded ellipses such as that of *cum* 'how' in [3.18] above as textual in nature, rather than structural.

The second reason behind my decision not to code ellipses as structural has to do with the difficulty of defining such ellipses. Indeed, what might be interpreted as an instance of structural ellipsis by some speakers would not necessarily be read the same way by other speakers. For instance, depending on the perspective taken on structure, some might perceive sentence [3.19] below as an instance of ellipsis of complementizer *that*, while others might be of the opinion that there is no ellipsis involved in it.

[3.19] The calloused hands [*that*] he rested on the wire fence were cracked (Steinbeck, p.208).

The lack of pure structural ellipses in Romanian, on the one hand, and the relative ambiguity about structural ellipses in English, on the other, made me opine that my study might gain in credibility if I altogether overlooked structural ellipses and only addressed textual ellipses and situational ellipses, instead.

Ellipses were labeled as *textual* if they were retrievable from the neighboring discourse. Textual ellipses were subject to further subcategorization. Namely, they were

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subclassified as *anaphoric*, wherein the antecedent was recovered from the preceding discourse (see examples [3.13] through [3.17] above) or *cataphoric*, wherein the antecedent occurred in the following discourse (as in the case of [3.5] and [3.9] above).

In contrast, with *situational* ellipses, recoverability was insured by the context of situation. Such was the case in [3.20] below.

[3.20] Give my regards to the cops. [*Do you*] Think they'll believe you? (Bradbury, p.277)

Textual ellipsis entails identity between the ellipted language material and the overtly present antecedent. In the present study, sentences were categorized as elliptical whether the identity between the antecedent and the target was absolute or relative. Absolute identity included cases where the overtly present antecedent and the presumable ellipsis, not only co-referred, but also seemed to be formally identical, as in [3.21].

[3.21] With her trowel *she* turned the soil over and over, and [*she*] smoothed it and [*she*] patted it firm (Steinbeck, p.207).

In [3.21] above, where the antecedent noun phrase is expressed by the 3rd person singular feminine pronoun form *she*, I felt it was only reasonable to assume that the two instances of ellipsis involving noun phrases following it were expressed by the same pronoun; in other words, I assumed that there was absolute identity between them.

In contrast to the absolute identity discussed above, relative identity entailed an antecedent and a presumable ellipsis that co-referred but were, in all likelihood, not identical in terms of form. Such an instance is illustrated in [3.22] below.

[3.22] I'll get out *the car*. You can put on your coat while I'm starting [*it*] (Steinbeck, p.214).

In example [3.22] above, I opined that it was unlikely for an immediately follow-ing reference to the antecedent *the car* to repeat the noun form. In such instances, pro-noun forms would generally prevail. Therefore, I perceived the identity between the ante-cedent *the car* and its subsequent ellipsis – in all likelihood, the coreferent pronoun form *it*, rather than a repetition of the determiner-plus-noun form *the car* – as relative in nature. However, regardless of whether an example entailed deletion of the exact form displayed by the antecedent or deletion of a corresponding pro-form, the non-overtly present entity was labeled as ellipsis.

3.4. A brief excursion into Romanian

There exists quite a difference between English and Romanian in terms of the ways the grammatical subject is treated; hence the imperative of a short presentation of grammati-cal subjects in Romanian.

Let us consider example [3.23].

[3.23] [∅] E după amiază, ora siestei (Niculescu, p.76)

[∅] Is after noon, hour-the siesta-the of

'It is afternoon, the hour of the siesta' (Niculescu, p.77).

In instances such as [3.23] above, whereas the lack of an overtly present subject might be considered ellipsis, it is more appropriate in terms of Romanian typology to use the label 'inexpressible subject,' where inexpressible subject translates as the inconceivable sub-

jcct of a (typically) impersonal verb such as *rain*, *snow*, and the like (Avram, 1986, p.260). Note that, in this study, the bracketed null-set symbol above is meant to indicate lack of ellipsis.

Along with the inexpressible subject, Romanian also displays another peculiarity. Namely, instances of lack of overtly present 1st or a 2nd person pronoun, whether singular or plural, are not seen as ellipses in Romanian. Given that the morphology of the verb makes the person and number of the subject clear, such instances are called 'included subjects,' i.e., subjects easily inferred from the inflection carried by the finite verb (Avram, 1986; Dimitriu, 1982). Example [3.24] below illustrates such a subject.

[3.24] [∅] Stau întins în pat, cu mîinile sub cap, într-o cameră de hotel, la Atena (Niculescu, p.76)

[∅] Lie-1st-sg stretched in bed, with hands-the under head, in-a room of hotel, at Athens

'I lie stretched on the bed, with my hands under my head, in a hotel room at Athens' (Niculescu, p.77).

The difference between an inexpressible subject and an included subject lies in that the former implies no 'doer,' and hence cannot be reconstructed, while behind the latter there exists a 'doer,' who/which can be overtly present, in instances of grammatical markedness. In this respect, there is a certain amount of similitude between the imperative construction (in either English or Romanian, as outlined below – see section 3.5) and included subjects in Romanian. Note that neither of the types of subject outlined above was coded as ellipsis in the present study.

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3.5. Treatment of Romanian discourse samples

As sentences [3.23] and [3.24] above may have foreshadowed, whenever examples from the Romanian corpus are given, the Romanian original is followed by a gloss and a translation. Insofar as the glosses are concerned, there is a thing that needs mentioning: it is the high incidence of the hyphen.

Indeed, a hyphen occurs in the gloss whenever the Romanian text exhibits a hyphen itself – see *într-o* 'in a', glossed as *in-a* in example [3.24] above. It should be noted here that in present-day Romanian the hyphen is a very frequently employed diacritical mark, in that it occurs, not only in compound words, as is the case in say, English or French, but also in instances where the said languages would resort to the apostrophe. I was of the opinion that a hyphen would be appropriate whenever a Romanian word could not to be rendered in English by means of one word only – see the phrase *un băiețel de vreo cinci ani* (Niculescu, p.78) 'a little boy of about five,' where the diminutive noun form *băiețel* 'little boy' was glossed as *little-boy*. Finally, I resorted to hyphenation whenever a Romanian lexical-grammatical unit carried several items of grammatical information – for instance, number, definiteness, gender, and case with noun phrases, as in *ora siestei* 'the hour of the siesta' in example [3.23] above, glossed as *hour-the siesta-the-of*, and person and number in the case of verbs, as in *stau* 'I lie' in example [3.24] above, glossed as *lie-1st-sg*.

As mentioned above, along with the gloss, the Romanian examples occurring in the study are followed by a translation. Where the examples come from the literary texts, the published English version is resorted to; as for the examples taken from the newspaper corpus, an *ad hoc* translation is provided.

3.6. Basic rules and methodological conventions

As mentioned earlier in this study, I considered there was no subject ellipsis involved in imperative verb forms. Given that neither English nor Romanian imperatives will normally carry an overt subject (which does not mean that they necessarily go without a subject, nevertheless; witness instances of marked imperatives, such as the English *You shut up* and the Romanian *Tu vezi-ți de treburile tale* 'You mind your own business'), I decided that imperatives not carrying an overtly present subject should not be regarded as instances of subject ellipsis. Note that this decision contravenes the generally accepted definition whereby ellipsis occurs wherever the insertion of an element into the discourse leads to a grammatically acceptable structure without impacting the initial meaning (see Sanders, 1977).

In keeping with this decision, the subjectless imperatives found in the texts under analysis were regarded as involving no subject ellipsis. Here are two such instances found in the English and Romanian texts, respectively.

[3.25] [Ø] *Get* that flea-trap out of the way! (Bradbury, p.274)

[3.26] [Ø] *Veniți* cu mine (Eliade, p.30)

[Ø] *Come-2nd-pl* with me

'Come with me' (Eliade, p.31).

Note that neither [3.25] nor [3.26] above was seen as ellipsis of the grammatical subject.

An issue involving both the languages under study that I had to overcome was that conjoined constructions, whether syndetic (i.e., achieved by means of a conjunction) or asyndetic (i.e., achieved without a conjunction) can oftentimes be regarded as two- or

manifold manifestations of a single entity/trait/event/etc. This issue (henceforth referred to as the 'two/several-for-one' criterion) was applied to all classes of words; however, it was particularly manifest with nouns. For example, the said criterion was applied in the coordinated structure *fog and rain do not go together* (Steinbeck, p.205), where *fog and rain* represents an instance of combinatory coordination functioning as subject in a symmetrical/reciprocal construction (see Quirk *et al.*, 1985; van Oirsouw, 1987). The combinatory nature of such coordination is indicated both by the *both*-test (**both the fog and the rain do not go together*) and by the impossibility for either of the conjoined nouns to occur in the absence of the other (witness **the fog/rain does not go together*).

The 'two/several-for-one' criterion was also often applied where coordination involved adjectives, as in [3.27] and [3.28] below.

[3.27] Her face was eager and [∅] *mature* and [∅] *handsome* (Steinbeck, p.206).

[3.28] Era un bărbat *între două vîrste*, [∅] *bine legat*, [∅] aproape *gras* (Eliade, p.10)

Was-3rd-sg a man *between two ages*, [∅] *well tied*, [∅] almost *fat*

'He was a middle-aged man, well-built, almost fat' (Eliade, p.11).

The instances of coordination in [3.27] and [3.28] above both denote parallel, coexisting features of one and the same entity. Each of the adjectives could exist independently of the other two. However, in neither of the examples above could only one of the adjectives, taken independently, express the meaning conveyed by the conjoined adjective complex taken as a whole. For instance, a middle-aged man does not need to be well built and/or fat. Therefore, one can only get the real picture of what the man looks like if one takes the three qualities together, viewing them as facets of a superordinate feature.

This need for 'togetherness' in the reading of two or more features makes conjoined adjectives resemble the combinatory coordination *fog and rain* discussed above – a resemblance which made me decide that adjective strings like the ones in [3.27] and [3.28] should not be seen as elliptical.

Likewise, the 'two-for-one' criterion was applied where verbs were involved, as illustrated by examples [3.29] and [3.30] below.

[3.29] Thirty seconds after the smash they were all standing over me and [Ø] *staring* at me (Bradbury, p.273).

[3.30] You keep hinting and [Ø] *never telling* (Bradbury, p.277).

In example [3.29] above, the subject (*they*) is performing a two-pronged action: the action of *standing over and staring*. As with the conjoined nouns and conjoined adjectives in [3.27] and [3.28] above, the two verbs could have been taken as distinct. However, the meaning conveyed would have been different. Indeed, people can stare without necessarily standing over; also, even though less likely, the reverse could be the case, as well, in that people could potentially stand over without necessarily staring. In example [3.29] above, I opined that *stand over and stare* wanted taking together, as a complex, superordinate action – the action of standing over and staring, both in one – rather than as distinct actions taking place independently of each other.

The same holds true in [3.30], in that *hinting* does not necessarily imply *never telling*: sometimes people who hint at things eventually end up by speaking their minds out, i.e., telling things. However, in example [3.30] above, *keep hinting and never telling* was viewed as a single superordinate action, rather than as disparate actions.

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Another shape under which the 'two-for-one' criterion occasionally came into being was coordination, either of repeated words/phrases or of synonyms or closely related words/phrases. Such instances were not perceived as ellipses, either. Consider examples [3.31] and [3.32] below.

[3.31] Mr. Bush's margin *dwindled and* [∅] *dwindled* (NYT.A01, p.2 of 4).

[3.32] We *hope and* [∅] *believe* we have elected the next president of the United States (NYP.A01, p.2 of 5).

I opined that there was no subject ellipsis in examples [3.31] and [3.32] above, and I perceived both the verb repetition in [3.31] and the coordination of closely related verbs in [3.32] as means of creating new meanings. Just as two/several entities, qualities, actions, or events can be viewed as a new, superordinate entity, quality, or action/event, respectively, so can repetition of a word or phrase and/or usage of synonyms or near-synonyms in adjoining positions represent means of creating new meanings. Therefore, instances like *dwindled and dwindled* and *hope and believe* above were seen as more than the mere sums of their parts: they were seen as new verbs, with new readings – in which capacity they did not need two overtly present subjects.

Despite its wide applicability, nevertheless, the 'two/several-for-one' criterion was not resorted to in instances where the conjoined words/phrases were distinct entities, rather than parts of a superordinate whole. Such was the case in sentences [3.33] and [3.34] below, where the doer is one and the same, yet the actions were perceived as distinct enough from one another to call for interpretations of subject ellipses.

[3.33] She kneeled on the ground by the starting bed and [*she*] dug up the sandy soil

with her fingers and [*she*] scooped it into the bright new flower pot (Steinbeck,

p.210).

[3.34] Gore își bagă repede ceasul în buzunarul vestei, [*el*] bătu înviorat cu palma în

masă și [*el*] strigă... (Eliade, p.12)

Gore to-himself thrust swiftly watch-the in pocket-the vest-the-of, [*he*] slapped-

3rd-sg refreshenedly with palm-the in table and [*he*] called-3rd-sg...

'Gore quickly thrust his watch into his waistcoat pocket, banged vigorously on the

table with the flat of his hand and called' (Eliade, p.13).

In both [3.33] and [3.34] above, the actions done by the subjects (*she* and *Gore*,

respectively) are distinct, and they do not occur in parallel. Even though digging and

scooping, and banging the table with one's palm and calling out, respectively, could be

simultaneous actions, they must necessarily follow kneeling down and putting one's

watch into one's pocket. The strings of actions in both the examples above were therefore

viewed as independent actions, and the subjectlessness of the following clauses was

coded as clause-initial nominal ellipsis of the grammatical subject.

3.7. Difficulties to overcome during the analysis

I must admit that I failed to foresee all the difficulties I was to be confronted with in my

analysis. Such difficulties I had to overcome during the ellipsis identification process. For

instance, deciding whether there was ellipsis involved in the objectless occurrence of cer-

tain verbs normally occurring with an object was a hard task. Such was the case with the

verb *run* in example [3.35] below, which would, when carrying the meaning it conveys here, normally go with the preposition *for* and an object following it.

[3.35] After a race that lasted 17 months for Bush – and 12 years for Gore, who first *ran* [∅] in 1988… (NYP.A01, p.3 of 5).

However, the verb *run* in its specialized use in political jargon illustrated by example [3.35] above is non-elliptical in nature, in that under special circumstances verbs normally requiring an object can be recategorized as intransitive. Consequently, this instance of *run* was not identified as ellipsis.

I found instances of objectless transitive verbs in the Romanian corpus, as well. In contrast to the case involving the English verb *run* discussed above, nevertheless, such instances did not seem to be conventionalized. As a result, they were regarded and coded as object ellipses. Example [3.36] is an illustration of such an ellipsis taken from one of the Romanian texts.

[3.36] Altădată, dacă mă mai întorc, voi revedea [*totul*] pe indelete și pe alese (Niculescu, p.76)

Other-time, if myself more return-1st-sg, will-1st-sg see-again [*everything*] at ease and at choice

'Another time, if I return, I shall see it again in a more leisurely and selective way' (Niculescu, p.77).

My interpretation of the instance above as ellipsis of object coincided with that of the translator – witness the overt presence of the direct object (be it in the most neutral of forms possible, namely the pronoun form *it*) in the published translation. Instances of ob-

ject ellipsis like the one illustrated in [3.36] above by no means made the message difficult to decode and/or comprehend. However, ellipsis recovery required knowledge of the world, and maybe also of the way Romanian works. Lack thereof would probably have rendered the message very difficult, if at all possible, to understand.

I encountered no serious difficulties concerning the locus of ellipsis: it was, in general, self-evident. However, I did come across a few instances where there were several potential loci of ellipsis, which rendered precise reconstruction pure and simple impossible. Consider examples [3.37] and [3.38] below.

[3.37] That street was empty. Not a soul in sight. *And then the accident* (Bradbury, p.273).

[3.38] E o linişte de somn şi totuşi *mi se pare un freamăt* în odaie (Niculescu, p.90)

Is a silence of sleep and yet *to-me seems a murmur* in room

'There is a calm as of sleep and yet I seem to hear a murmur in the room' (Niculescu, p.91).

In example [3.37] I found it hard to decide whether the ellipsis involved a subject-and-verb complex (*And then [there was/came] the accident*) or, rather, it was a verbal ellipsis (*And then the accident [occurred]*). Likewise, in sentence [3.38] I hesitated between an interpretation whereby *mi se pare un freamăt* was an instance of complementizer-plus-included-subject-and-verb ellipsis (*mi se pare [că (eu) aud] un freamăt* 'it seems to me [that I hear] a murmur') and one in terms of which it was an instance of complementizer-and-verb ellipsis (*mi se pare [că se aude] un freamăt* 'it seems to me [that] a murmur [is heard]). When faced with like difficulties, I opted, wherever possible,

for the simpler interpretation; hence my decision that both [3.37] and [3.38] above be perceived as verbal ellipses, rather than as complex ellipses.

However, the rule of thumb outlined above could not be applied at all times. Consider example [3.39] below.

[3.39] He saw another familiar face! ... All the crowd faces—[*(they) were*] familiar, yet unfamiliar... (Bradbury, p.275)

In this case, where I had to choose between a verb-only ellipsis interpretation (*All the crowd faces [were] familiar*) and a subject-and-verb one (*All the crowd faces—[they were] familiar*), I opted for the latter interpretation, my option being accounted for by the writer's decision to use the dash, which suggests that the noun phrase *all the crowd faces* was not meant to fulfill the role of subject to a potential ellipted verb form *were*. Note that no such 'must-break-the-rule' situations were encountered in the Romanian texts.

Like the issue of locus, outlined above, ellipsis recovery did not generally pose problems, either. Given that I only analyzed written discourse, ellipsis retrieval was, more often than not, based in the text. Situational ellipses were scarcer, and they mainly occurred in dialogues between characters in a text. However, some of the few situational ellipses I found were pretty hard to recover. Example [3.40], taken from the Romanian corpus, illustrates an instance of situational ellipsis of a pronoun form whose referent was hard to retrieve with absolute certainty.

[3.40] [*Ei/Ele*] Nu mai vin, spuse cîrciumarul (Eliade, p.12)

[*They-masc/They-fem*] Not more come, said innkeeper-the

' "They won't come," said the innkeeper' (Eliade, p.11).

The context makes it clear that there is subject ellipsis involved [3.40] above. Moreover, the morphology of the verb shows that the elliptical subject is a 3rd person plural form. As suggested in the gloss, there are two options of filling in the ellipsis slot. One is the masculine form of the 3rd person plural personal pronoun *ei* 'they-masc,' where the elliptical pronoun might refer to a noun phrase expressed by means of the deictic element upgraded to head *ăştia* 'these guys,' where *ăştia* is the everyday variant of the masculine plural demonstrative denoting proximity 'these.' The other possible option of filling in the slot is the feminine form of the 3rd person plural personal pronoun *ele* 'they-fem,' in which case the elliptical pronoun might refer to the noun phrase *avioanele* 'the planes' – note that in Romanian nouns can be masculine, feminine, or neuter, and that with plurals the distinction between feminine and neuter is annihilated; hence the apparent feminine-ness of the noun *avioanele* 'the planes,' which is substituted for by a formally feminine pro-form. Whichever the option, however, the ellipsis in [3.40] remains a clause-initial nominal element functioning as subject not retrievable from the neighboring discourse, whether preceding the ellipsis or following it. One must conclude therefore – by process of elimination – that the said subject can only be retrieved from the extralinguistic context of the act of communication.

At times, establishing the exact word/phrase undergoing situational ellipsis was difficult. This was particularly the case where, in theory at least, more than one word or word group overtly present in the neighboring discourse could successfully fill in the ellipsis slot. Consider sentences [3.41] and [3.42] below.

[3.41] I remember one thing that puts it all together and [*that/it*] makes it funny, God, so

damned funny (Bradbury, p.273)

[3.42] Drept în față văd firma unui hotel; dar [*firma/hotelul*] e prea la iveală și mă tem că

s-ar putea să fie zgomot seara, pînă tîrziu (Niculescu, p.82)

Straight ahead see-1st-sg sign-the one-of hotel; but [*sign-the/hotel-the*] is too at

fore and myself fear-1st-sg that might-3rd-sg SUBJ be-3rd-sg noise evening-the,

until late

'Right in front I see the sign of a hotel; but it is too prominent and I am afraid that

there might be noise in the evening till late' (Niculescu, p.83).

In [3.41] above, it is not altogether clear whether the omitted subject is the relative pronoun *that* (in which case *and* conjoins two relative clauses, and the re-created text reads, *I remember one thing that puts it all together and that makes it funny…*) or the personal pronoun *it* (and then *and* conjoins two main clauses, and the re-created text reads, *I remember one thing that puts it all together and it makes it funny…*). Given that in the latter case there should normally have been some punctuation (e.g., a comma or a dash) before the *and*-clause, I assumed that the ellipted word was *that*, rather than *it*. However, I was not very much concerned about the difficulty of deciding which the exact ellipted word was: it sufficed, for the accuracy of my study, that it was a textually recoverable anaphoric clause-initial ellipsis of a nominal functioning as grammatical subject.

Far more ambiguity exists about the omitted grammatical subject in [3.42] above. It is practically impossible to decide whether the left-out word is *firma* 'the sign' or *hotelul* 'the hotel.' If one opts for the former interpretation, one's reading will be *Drept în față văd firma unui hotel; dar [ea/firma] e prea la iveală* 'Right in front I see the sign of a hotel; but it (the sign) is too prominent.' In contrast, if one considers that the ellipted element is *hotelul* 'the hotel,' one will arrive at the interpretation, *Drept în față văd firma*

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unui hotel; dar [el/hotelul] e prea la iveală 'Right in front I see the sign of a hotel; but it (the hotel) is too prominent.' Both options are equally acceptable and correct, and I could not completely rule out either of them. The impossibility to establish with maximum certainty the lexical identity of the ellipted word did not by any means affect my study, in that, whichever the interpretation, sentence [3.42] (just like sentence [3.41] discussed above) involved a clause-initial, anaphorically-recoverable nominal element fulfilling the role of subject.

In other instances, the left-out element hard to reinstate was a verb. Even though it was clear, syntax-wise, that there was a verb missing, it was not always easy to decide what the actual verb was, lexis-wise. Such was the case in examples [3.43] and [3.44] below.

[3.43] She'd sure like to have some, ma'am. [*Did/Would*] You say they're nice ones?

       (Steinbeck, p.210)

[3.44] Flori nu se mai văd. [*Se văd/Sînt*] Numai ziduri scunde, domoale, troienite alb

       (Niculescu, p.88)

       Flowers not REFL-PASS more see-3rd-pl. [*REFL-PASS see-3rd-pl/Are-3rd-pl*]

       Only walls low, soft, drifted white

       'No more flowers are to be seen. Only low walls like gentle white drifts' (Niculescu, p.89).

In example [3.43], it was hard to decide what the missing element was: it could be either *did* or *would*. It was beyond any doubt, however, that it was an instance of textually recoverable, clause-initial, partial verbal ellipsis. What was less clear, at first, was

whether it was anaphoric or cataphoric. However, a closer scrutiny of the neighboring discourse strongly suggested that it was the former.

There were two options of filling in the ellipsis site in example [3.44], as well. One of them was to supply the reflexive-passive form of the verb *see* inflected for 3rd person plural (note that reflexive-passive constructions in Romanian are equivalent to indefinite constructions in other languages; cf., English *One sees only…* or French *On ne voit que…*). The alternative was to insert the indicative present of existential *be* inflected for 3rd person plural. Either way, there was a clause-initial verbal element missing. As for recoverability, I had to choose between the two reconstructions outlined above – one prompted by the neighboring text and one by the extralinguistic context, based on intuition. As mentioned earlier in this study, whenever there were, potentially, two sources of recovery for an instance of ellipsis (namely, the neighboring text and the extralinguistic context), I opted for the textual interpretation of the said ellipsis. In agreement with this, I coded the ellipses in [3.43] and [3.44] as textual.

3.8. Purpose of the study

The purpose of the present study was to assess the loci and the sphere of retrievability of nominal, verbal, and complex ellipses isolated in quantitatively and thematically comparable English and Romanian written discourse samples. More specifically, the study meant (a) to investigate the frequency of occurrence of nominal, verbal, and complex ellipses both intra-linguistically and intra-categorially and (b) to contrast the findings in the two corpora with a view to revealing the extent to which the two languages operate similarly, ellipsis usage-wise, and identifying the areas where they behave differently, respectively. The findings of this study are presented and discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter IV

Text analysis

4.1. Findings of the study – a bird's eye view

With a view to contrasting the ways in which the three types of ellipsis within the focus of the present thesis (nominal, verbal, and complex ellipses, respectively) operate in English and Romanian written discourse, I analyzed samples taken from two distinct genres, namely the literary genre and the newspaper genre. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the samples of literary discourse were taken from different authors; also, inasmuch as it was possible, I attempted to use newspaper article samples authored by different journalists. I did this as a means to overcome the jeopardy of ending up with findings typical of a certain individual's personal style, rather than of a genre.

All the findings arrived at in the study are presented in tables, and they are reported in two ways. The first way of presenting results entails reporting the frequency of occurrence of the different subtypes of ellipsis and the percentage thereof; the findings are reported, not only as actual numbers of occurrences, but also as percents within the language/category. This approach (henceforth referred to as 'frequency') makes findings easy to compare intra-linguistically. As for the second means of presenting results, it translates as reporting the number of occurrences of a specific subtype of ellipsis per one

thousand words. This approach (henceforth referred to as 'ratio') seems relevant mainly in the cross-linguistic analysis of ellipsis usage.

The elliptical constructions within the focus of my analysis isolated in the discourse samples outlined above were identified and coded as nominal, verbal, and complex, respectively, and they were counted. The ellipsis computation was done manually, and the results obtained are presented in *Table 5* below.

Language	Ellipsis types	Nominal	Verbal	Complex	Total
English	– frequency	159 (47.7%)	23 (6.9%)	151 (45.3%)	333 (100%)
	– ratio	7.23	1.05	6.87	15.15
Romanian	– frequency	577 (82.5%)	76 (10.9%)	46 (6.6%)	699 (100%)
	– ratio	25.04	3.30	2.00	30.34

Table 5. Nominal, verbal, and complex ellipses in the corpora under analysis

A mere glimpse at *Table 5* above will suffice to make one aware that the three types of ellipses under investigation were all identified both in English and in Romanian. However, the table also shows that there were far more ellipses per one thousand words in the Romanian texts than in the English ones. This was true in terms of overall ratios of ellipses, where the Romanian texts displayed approximately twice as many ellipses as the English ones (30.34 per 1000 words vs. 15.15 per 1000 words). The balance was even more tipped in favor of Romanian in terms of nominal ellipses, where the Romanian texts (25.04 instances of nominal ellipses per 1000 words) outweighed the English texts (7.23 per 1000 words) by a ratio of nearly 3.5 to 1 (25.04÷7.23=3.46). The same was true for verbal ellipses, where the Romanian texts outweighed the English texts by a ratio of over 3 to 1 (3.30÷1.05=3.14).

In contrast, the number of complex ellipses found in the two languages was suggestive of a much greater incidence thereof in English than in Romanian. Indeed, in terms of complex ellipses, it was the English texts that prevailed by a ratio of nearly 3.5

of complex ellipses, it was the English texts that prevailed by a ratio of nearly 3.5 to 1 (6.87÷2.00=3.43).

A more thorough study of *Table 5* reveals the fact that the incidence of the respective ellipses exhibits many other considerable peculiarities, as well. For instance, English nominal ellipses and complex ellipses had similar numbers of occurrences, while the number of occurrences of verbal ellipsis was considerably lower – note that there were only 23 verbal ellipses, as opposed to the 159 and the 151 that were nominal and complex, respectively. In terms of percentages, the instances of verbal ellipsis found in the English texts represented merely 6.9% of the total number of elliptical constructions, while those coded as nominal and complex represented 47.7% and 45.3%, respectively. In other words, the English texts exhibited considerable difference in terms of the incidence of the types of ellipsis encountered therein.

This unequal distribution of ellipsis types was also true for the Romanian texts. Indeed, as seen in *Table 5*, nominal ellipses rejoiced at the lion's share of the sum-total of elliptical constructions occurring in the Romanian texts, as well, in that 577 (i.e., 82.5%) of the 699 ellipses identified in the Romanian corpus were nominal in nature, while verbal ellipses and complex ellipses were far scarcer (76, i.e., 10.9%, vs. 46, i.e., 6.6%).

A contrastive look at *Table 5* will reveal both similarities and dissimilarities between the two languages under investigation. For instance, as mentioned above, both the languages exhibited all the three types of ellipsis at the core of my study. Moreover, in both the languages, nominal ellipses prevailed over the other two types. However, the ratio of nominal ellipses differed considerably. Indeed, even though ranked first among the ellipsis types in my tally of ellipsis occurrences in the English texts, nominal ellipses

only had a ratio of 7.23 per 1000 words therein; in contrast, Romanian nominal ellipses were by far the most frequently met with, exhibiting a ratio of 25.04 per 1000 words in the Romanian texts.

Another thing the two languages seem to have in common has to do with the relatively low rate of verbal ellipsis. Indeed, verbal ellipses had a ratio of 1.05 per 1000 words in the English texts and 3.30 per 1000 words in the Romanian texts. Nevertheless, while verbal ellipsis seemed to be the least favored type of ellipsis in the English texts, it ranked better in the Romanian texts, where it was more common than complex ellipsis.

In addition to the two commonalities mentioned above, *Table 5* also reveals a clear-cut distinction between the two languages. This distinction has to do with the third category of ellipsis in my nomenclature – namely, complex ellipses. While relatively frequent in English, where they had a ratio of 6.87 per 1000 words, complex ellipses were quite scarce in the Romanian texts, where the ratio was merely 2 per 1000 words.

A more detailed presentation and discussion of the findings concerning the three morpho-syntactic elements (noun groups, verb groups, and combinations thereof, respectively) undergoing ellipsis in the texts focused upon in this study is given in the sections to follow. Thus, section 4.2 tackles nominal ellipsis, with particular focus on the position in the clause of the ellipted nominal (subsection 4.2.1) and its retrievability (subsection 4.2.2), respectively. Further depth is achieved in subsections 4.2.1.1, 4.2.1.2, and 4.2.1.3, where nominal ellipses are discussed in terms of two intersecting dimensions – clause-locus and syntactic role played in the clause – as well as in subsections 4.2.2.1, 4.2.2.2, and 4.2.2.3, respectively, where the two intersecting dimensions are the syntactic function and the domain of recoverability of the left-out nominal element. Section 4.3 is devoted

to the presentation and discussion of verbal ellipsis. Verbal ellipses are in turn discussed in terms of position (subsection 4.3.1) and retrievability (subsection 4.3.2). Again, the intersections of syntactic role with locus (subsections 4.3.1.1 through 4.3.1.3) and retrievability (subsections 4.3.2.1 through 4.3.2.3), respectively, are focused upon. Finally, section 4.4 is an approach to the complex ellipses in the texts under investigation. Complex ellipses are discussed in terms of the elements making up the complex. Differentiation is made among the various complex ellipsis subtypes in terms of the elements that are left out – the subject and (part of) the verb, the verb and its object, the predication, or both the subject and the predication, respectively. In turn, complex ellipses are discussed in terms of locus (subsection 4.4.1), with locus and syntax being intersected (subsections 4.4.1.1 through 4.4.1.3), and then in terms of retrievability (subsection 4.4.2), with further depth of analysis where retrievability intersects with syntax (subsections 4.4.2.1 through 4.4.2.3). In each of the sections outlined above, the discussion of the ellipses identified in the two languages is done separately, first, and contrastively, next, and the most important similarities and dissimilarities noticed therein are pointed out.

4.2. Nominal ellipsis

In terms of the function performed in the clause, the ellipses of nominals identified in the two corpora fell into two categories: subjects and objects. In the English texts, the latter category of ellipted nominals allowed for further subcategorization – into direct objects and prepositional objects. In contrast, no such dichotomy was noted in the Romanian texts, where the category of prepositional object never showed up. Note that no indirect objects undergoing ellipsis were identified in any of the texts belonging to either of the languages under study.

A quantitative report on the instances of nominal ellipsis identified in the two corpora under analysis is given in *Table 6* below.

Language	Function	Subject	Object	Total
English	– frequency – ratio	143 (89.9%) 6.51	16 (10.1%) .72	159 (100%) 7.23
Romanian	– frequency – ratio	569 (98.6%) 24.69	8 (1.4%) .35	577 (100%) 25.04

Table 6. Nominal ellipses in terms of syntactic function

As seen in *Table 6* above, the immense majority (143 of 159, i.e., 89.9%) of the nominal elements ellipted from the English texts under investigation played the syntactic role of subject; in contrast, only 16 of the 159 ellipted nominals (i.e., 10.1%) fulfilled the role of object. The preponderance of grammatical subjects among the left-out nominals in the Romanian texts was found to be even more acute – 569 of 577 (i.e., 98.6%) such elliptical elements were grammatical subjects, as opposed to the merely 8 (i.e., 1.4%) functioning as objects. In the light of these findings, subject ellipsis seems to prevail over object ellipsis in both the languages under discussion.

Further differentiation can be achieved within nominal ellipses in the two corpora in terms of the locus of the ellipsis and the retrievability of the ellipsis. These two issues are discussed in the subsections to follow, 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, respectively.

4.2.1. Nominal ellipsis in terms of locus

Table 7 below provides a locus-based report on the nominal ellipses identified in the two corpora.

Locus of ellipses / Language	Initial	Medial	Final	Total
English – frequency	134 (84.3%)	17 (10.7%)	8 (5%)	159 (100%)
– ratio	6.10	.77	.36	7.23
Romanian – frequency	461 (79.9%)	75 (13%)	41 (7.1%)	577 (100%)
– ratio	20.00	3.26	1.78	25.04

Table 7. Nominal ellipses in terms of locus

Table 7 above shows that the great majority of the ellipted nominals in both of the languages occurred in initial position in the clause. Indeed, as seen in the table, 134 (i.e., 84.3%) of the 159 nominal ellipsis sites identified in the English texts occurred initially in the clause, as contrasted with the 17 (i.e., 10.7%) occurring in clause-medial position and the merely eight (i.e., 5%) that occurred in clause-final position. The findings in the Romanian texts were very much a blueprint copy of those in English: 461 (i.e., 79.9%) of the 577 ellipted nominals occurred clause-initially, greatly outnumbering both those occurring medially (75 of 577, representing 13%) and those occurring finally in the clause (41 of 577, i.e., 7.1%).

The findings in *Table 7* show therefore that the nominal elements most eligible for ellipsis in either of the languages contrasted in the present study occurred initially in the clause, and that initial nominal ellipses were greatly favored over either medial or final ones – note, in this respect, that initial nominal ellipses represented over 84% of the total number of ellipted nominals tallied in the English texts and ca. 80% of those found in the Romanian texts. In other words, initial nominal ellipses in either English or Romanian short story and newspaper discourse occurred approximately four times as frequently as non-initial ones. The table also indicates that the second most frequent nominal ellipsis, locus-wise, in both the languages under investigation was medial ellipsis, which had a frequency rate of 10.7% in the English texts and 13% in the Romanian texts.

As for the site where nominal ellipses were the least frequent in both the languages, it was the clause-final one, which had 5% of the tallies of ellipted nominals in the English texts and 7.1% of those in the Romanian texts. A further thing noticed while considering the findings presented in *Table 7* was that the medial vs. final nominal ellipses ratio in either of the languages under study revolved around the value of 2 to 1 (17÷8 in the English texts and 75÷41 in the Romanian texts, respectively).

More information about the locus of nominal ellipsis in the two languages is provided in subsections 4.2.1.1 through 4.2.1.3, which present the findings concerning the nominal ellipses identified in the English and Romanian written discourse samples by further dividing the locus in the clause according to the syntactic function of the ellipted element(s).

4.2.1.1. Nominal ellipses in terms of locus – English texts

The results obtained upon intersecting the locus and the syntactic role of the nominal ellipses isolated in the English texts are presented in *Table 8* below.

Locus Function	Initial	Medial	Final	Total
Subject – frequency	134	9	–	143
– ratio	6.10	.41		6.51
Object – frequency	–	8	8	16
– ratio		.36	.36	.72
Total – frequency	134	17	8	159
– ratio	6.10	.77	.36	7.23

Table 8. Nominal ellipses in terms of locus and syntactic function – English texts

Table 8 above can be read in two distinct ways. It can be read either in terms of the locus of the elliptical nominal or in terms of the syntactic role played by it. As revealed by the table, in the former reading all of the 134 nominals occurring clause-

initially fulfilled the role of grammatical subject (see examples [4.1] and [4.2] below), while all of the clause-final occurrences of ellipted nominals fell into the grammatical category of object (see examples [4.3]) and see [4.4] below).

[4.1]   *Mr. Iliescu* barnstormed fading factory towns but [*he*] relaxed at the end and [*he*] even ignored one television debate because of a feud with the network (NYT.R02, p.3 of 4).

[4.2]   The crowd looked at him and *he* looked back at them and [*he*] did not like them at all (Bradbury, p.272).

[4.3]   Phone bills soared after *a Greek telephone company* bought *Romania's [telephone company]* and a private monopoly replaced a public one (NYT.R01, p.2 of 3).

[4.4]   Gore led by... 255 to 246 in the race for the magic number of *270 electoral votes* – but victory depended solely on Florida's *25 [votes]* (NYP.A02, p.2 of 4).

In examples [4.1] and [4.2] above, the clause-initial elements that have been left out fulfill the syntactic role of subject. As for sentences [4.3] and [4.4], they both exemplify clause-final ellipses of nominals functioning as objects. There is a difference, nevertheless, between these two sentences: the left-out nominal in [4.3] functions as direct object, while the one in [4.4] is object of a preposition – namely, the preposition *on*. Note that both [4.3] and [4.4] above are illustrations of partial ellipsis. In fact, most of the instances of object ellipsis encountered in the English texts were ellipses within, rather than ellipses of, noun phrases functioning as grammatical objects.

While all the clause-initial ellipses of nominals identified in the English texts functioned as subjects and all the clause-final ones functioned as objects, which suggests a tendency for clause-initial and clause-final nominals in the English texts to perform *only* a certain syntactic function, the picture changed drastically with nominals occurring in clause-medial position. Indeed, approximately half (9 of 17, to be more exact) of the instances of medial nominal ellipsis in the English texts functioned as subjects, and nearly as many (8 of 17, as arithmetic shows) functioned as objects – whether of a verb or of a preposition. Sentences [4.5] through [4.8] below provide instances of clause-medial nominal ellipses found in the English corpus.

[4.5]   At the back of his wagon *he* set a little anvil, and out of an oily tool box [*he*] dug a small machine hammer (Steinbeck, p.212).

[4.6]   In this election, *Congressional* [*candidates*] and *presidential candidates* alike did their best to skitter toward the center (NYT.A01, p.3 of 4).

[4.7]   Is American politics entering a *nonideological* [*phase*] or an *anti-ideological phase*? (NYT.A01, p.3 of 4)

[4.8]   They had all come from – where? Houses, cars, alleys, from *the immediate* [*world*] and *the accident-shocked world* (Bradbury, p.272).

In sentences [4.5] and [4.6] above, the nominal ellipses occurring clause-medially fulfill the syntactic role of subject. What is noteworthy about the clause-medial ellipses of nominals functioning as subjects identified in the English texts is that the element preced-

ing the subject was always an adverbial – whether an adverbial of place, as in [4.5], or an adverbial of time, as in [4.6].

As for sentences [4.7] and [4.8] above, they illustrate clause-medially occurring nominal elements functioning as objects. In such instances, the English texts exhibited both ellipses of nominals functioning as direct objects (see [4.7] above) and ellipses of nominals occurring as prepositional objects, as in the case of [4.8], where *the immediate [world]* is object of the preposition *from*.

As mentioned earlier in this subsection, *Table 8* above tells a different story if read in terms of the syntactic role fulfilled by the element undergoing ellipsis. Such a reading indicates that the nominals functioning as subject ellipted both when in clause-initial and when in clause-medial position, but not when in clause-final position. Indeed, there were 134 tallies of elliptical subjects occurring in clause-initial position (see sentences [4.1] and [4.2] above) and 9 tallies of elliptical subjects occurring in clause-medial position (see [4.5] and [4.6] above). In terms of percentages, the two types of elliptical subjects represented 93.7% and 6.3%, respectively, of the total number of instances wherein a grammatical subject was found to have undergone ellipsis in the English texts. In contrast, absolutely no instances of left-out subjects occurring clause-finally were identified in the English corpus.

As for the ellipted nominals fulfilling the role of object identified in the English texts, they occurred either clause-medially (see examples [4.7] and [4.8] above) or clause-finally (see [4.3] and [4.4] above); in contrast, they never occurred clause-finally. It should be noted, in this respect, that the 16 instances of ellipted nominals functioning

as object split into two numerically equal groups: half of them were clause-medial, and the other half occurred in clause-final position.

4.2.1.2. Nominal ellipses in terms of locus – Romanian texts

The results yielded by the Romanian texts when clause locus was crossed with syntactic function are presented in *Table 9* below.

Locus Function	Initial	Medial	Final	Total
Subject – frequency	460	73	36	569
– ratio	19.96	3.17	1.56	24.69
Object – frequency	1	2	5	8
– ratio	.04	.09	.22	.35
Total – frequency	461	75	41	577
– ratio	20.00	3.26	1.78	25.04

Table 9. Nominal ellipses in terms of locus and syntactic function – Romanian texts

Table 9 above shows that the Romanian texts yielded instances of ellipsis of/within nominal elements in any of the loci (initial, medial, or final) and in either of the syntactic functions (subject or object). A locus-based analysis of the nominal ellipses found in clause-initial position in the Romanian written discourse samples will indicate nevertheless that the immense majority of elliptical nominals performed the function of subject. Indeed, 460 (i.e., 99.8%) of the 461 ellipses of nominal elements occurring initially in the clause were subjects (as in [4.9] below), as opposed to the stranded instance wherein a clause-initial nominal ellipsis functioned as object – see [4.10] below.

[4.9]   *Pisica* se apropie de scaun, [*ea*] scînceşte privindu-mă jalnic şi [*ea*] înghite în sec
        (Niculescu, p.84)

        Cat-the REFL approaches of chair, [*she*] whimpers watching-me wretchedly and
        [*she*] swallows in dry

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'The cat approaches the chair, whimpers as she watches me sadly, and gulps' (Niculescu, p.85).

[4.10] La hotel *mă* dezbrac în grabă și [*mă*] întind sub cearșaful răcoros (Niculescu, p.92)

At hotel *myself* undress-1st-sg and [*myself*] stretch under sheet-the cool

'At the hotel I quickly undress and stretch myself out under the cool sheet' (Niculescu, p.93)

In sentence [4.9] above, the two instances of ellipsis of the clause-initial nominal *ea* 'she' perform the syntactic role of subject. Ellipsis is possible under referent identity with the overtly present antecedent *pisica* 'the cat.' As for sentence [4.10], it was solitary among the instances of ellipsis found in the Romanian texts. Its solitariness lies in that it displays ellipsis of an object occurring initially in the clause. Actually, what we have in [4.10] is an instance of an omitted reflexive pronoun (*mă* 'myself') which occurs initially in the clause because the subject is dropped – note that, as mentioned earlier in this thesis, 1st and 2nd person subjects in Romanian fall into the special category of 'included' subjects, i.e., they are carried in the morphology of the verb and thus become redundant.

Nominal ellipses occurring medially in the Romanian texts also functioned as either subjects or objects. However, as with the clause-initial position, there surfaced a strong tendency for such nominals to be ellipted subjects, rather than ellipted objects – note that 73 (i.e., 97.3%) of the clause-medial nominal ellipses found in the Romanian texts fulfilled the syntactic role of subject, as opposed to the barely two (i.e., 2.7%) that functioned as objects. Sentences [4.11] and [4.12] below are meant to exemplify ellipses

of clause-medial nominal subjects, while sentence [4.13] provides an instance of ellipsis of a clause-medial nominal functioning as object.

[4.11] *Trotuarul* era spart în mai multe locuri, și pe anumite distanțe [*el*] nu se mai cunoștea (Eliade, p.30)

Pavement-the was broken in several places, and on certain distances [*it*] not more was known

'The pavement was broken in several places, and for certain stretches was un-recognizable' (Eliade, p.31).

[4.12] Sărac sau bogat, zgârcit sau samaritean, *americanul*... s-a dus ieri să voteze și, pentru o secundă, [*el*] a fost puternic (Ziua.A01, p.1 of 2)

Poor or rich, niggardly or Samaritan, *American-the*... himself-went yesterday to vote and, for a second, [*he*] was strong

'Whether rich or poor, niggardly or a Samaritan, the American went to cast his vote yesterday and, for a second, he was strong.'

[4.13] Altădată, dacă mă mai întorc, voi revedea [*totul*] pe indelete și pe alese (Ni-culescu, p.76)

Other-time, if myself more return-1st-sg, will-1st-sg see-again [*everything*] at ease and at choice

'Another time, if I return, I shall see it again in a more leisurely and selective way' (Niculescu, p.77).

The omitted nominal elements in sentences [4.11] and [4.12] above both serve as subjects of the clauses from which they have been ellipted. Their antecedents (*trotuarul*

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'the pavement' and *americanul* 'the American,' respectively) are overtly present in the previous discourse, and it seems most sensible to assume that, if not omitted, they would have taken the shape of the corresponding pronoun *el* 'he/it' instead. Both the instance of ellipsis in [4.11] and that in [4.12] occur medially in the clause, the elements preceding the ellipsis site being adverbials – the adverbial of place *pe anumite distanţe* 'for certain stretches' and the adverbial of time *pentru o secundă* 'for a second,' respectively. Actually, except for a few instances involving a stylistically-grounded switch between the ellipted subject and its verb, all the clause-medial nominal ellipses functioning as subject found in the Romanian texts exhibited an adverbial preceding the ellipsis site.

As for sentence [4.13], the dropped nominal element occurring clause-medially fulfills the syntactic role of object. The fact that there is object deletion involved in the sentence has to be attributed to the compulsory transitivity of the Romanian verb *a revedea* (literally, 'to resee' – cf. French *revoir*), meaning 'to see again.'

The third, and last, position in the clause that a nominal ellipsis occupied in the Romanian texts was the final one. As in the case of initial and medial clause positions, the left-out nominals occurring clause-finally identified in the Romanian corpus functioned as either subjects or objects. However, as with ellipses of nominals occurring initially and/or medially in the clause, there was an obvious tendency for clause-final nominal ellipses to be subjects, rather than objects. Indeed, as seen in *Table 9* above, my tally of clause-final ellipses recorded 36 instances of nominals serving as subjects, while the number of clause-final nominals undergoing ellipsis functioning as objects only amounted to five. In other words, 87.8% of the clause-final nominal elements were ellipses of subjects, while the left-out objects only represented 12.2% of the instances of

clause-final ellipsis. Sentence [4.14] below displays the two syntactic functions poten-
tially carried by ellipted clause-final nominals found in the Romanian texts.

[4.14] Sandalele nu sînt nicăieri. *Îl* privesc întrebător. 'Le-a luat', îmi răspunde [*el*]. Aş

vrea să mai întreb [*ceva*], dar s-a făcut seară (Niculescu, p.92)

Sandals-the not are nowhere. *Him* watch-1st-sg questioningly. 'Them-has taken,'

to-me answers [*he*]. Would-1st-sg want to more ask [*something*], but has turned

evening

'The sandals are not there. I look at him questioningly. "They've been taken!" he

answers. I should like to ask more, but evening has come' (Niculescu, p.92).

Example [4.14] above illustrates the two possible functions of clause-final nomi-
nal ellipsis – namely, subject (see *el* 'he') or object (see *ceva* 'something'). As noted in
[4.14], the subject ellipses found in the Romanian texts did not require the antecedent of
the ellipted subject to be in the subject case itself. On the contrary, the antecedent could
very well be in the object case, as was the case with the pronoun form *il* 'him.'

The second possible reading of *Table 9* above – namely, the one that focuses upon
the syntactic role of the ellipsis-affected nominal – indicates that both the subject ellipses
and the object ellipses in the Romanian texts were valid options in any of the clause-
positions. However, as suggested by the findings in the table, the instances of subject el-
lipsis found in the Romanian corpus greatly outnumbered those of object ellipsis – note
that 569 (i.e., 98.6%) of the 577 nominal ellipses identified in the Romanian texts func-
tioned as subjects, while merely eight (i.e., 1.4%) fulfilled the role of object. This seems
to suggest a certain reticence vis-à-vis ellipses of objects in Romanian written discourse.

Another thing that surfaced from *Table 9* above was the tendency for the subject ellipses in the Romanian texts to occur clause-initially or clause-medially, rather than clause-finally. Note, in this respect, that 460 (i.e., 80.8%) of the 569 elliptical subjects were clause-initial, as opposed to the 73 (i.e., 12.8%) that occurred clause-medially and the 36 (i.e., 6.3) isolated in clause-final position. For illustrations of clause-initial, clause-medial, and clause-final subject ellipses in the Romanian texts, see sentences [4.9], [4.12], and [4.14] above, respectively.

In contrast, with elliptical objects the tendency was to occur finally, rather than medially or initially in the clause – note that my statistics show that five (i.e., 62.5%) of the eight object ellipses identified in the Romanian texts were clause-final, as opposed to the two (i.e., 25%) that were medial and the one (i.e., 12.5%) that was initial. Examples [4.14], [4.13], and [4.10] above provide instances of object ellipsis occurring clause-finally, clause-medially, and clause-initially, respectively.

4.2.1.3. A locus-based cross-linguistic approach to nominal ellipses

The locus-based analysis of the nominals involving ellipsis identified in the two corpora indicated that nominals in either of the languages mainly ellipted when occurring initially in the clause. Indeed, 134 of the 159 nominal ellipses identified in the English texts and 461 of the 577 found in the Romanian texts were clause-initial. The second most favored locus of nominal ellipses in either language was the clause-medial one (17 of 159 in English, 75 of 577 in Romanian), while the least frequent one was the clause-final one, which had 8 of the 159 tallies of nominal ellipses in English and 41 of the 577 ones in Romanian. In terms of locus of ellipsis of nominal elements, therefore, there was quite a lot of overlap between the two corpora.

Another similarity surfacing during my locus-based cross-linguistic study of nominal ellipses had to do with clause-medial ellipsis. More specifically, my analysis revealed that, in both the languages, clause-medial ellipsis translated as either ellipsis of a subject or as ellipsis of an object. Note that the instances of clause-medial subject ellipsis in either the English or the Romanian texts entailed an adverbial preceding the ellipted subject, and the adverbial at issue typically denoted time or place.

However, the locus-based analysis also revealed a considerable dissimilarity between the two languages. Namely, whereas the Romanian texts displayed either syntactic function (subject and object, respectively) in any of the loci, in the English texts there surfaced neither any clause-final subject ellipses nor any clause-initial object ellipses. The roots of this dissimilarity might lie in the present-day morphology of the noun phrase in the two languages: the Romanian noun phrase is heavily inflected, while the English noun phrase carries almost no inflections whatsoever. The heavy morphological loading of the Romanian noun phrase makes word order a somewhat discourse-conditioned issue. This makes it possible for subjects and objects alike to occur in whichever position – and hence to ellipt in whichever position. In contrast, the lack or morphological marking in English noun phrases causes the language to impose more strictness in the observance of the SVO sequence; hence, presumably, the lack of both subject ellipsis in clause-final position and object ellipsis in clause-initial position.

Another dissimilarity that arose between the two languages had to do with the ratio of nominal ellipses, and it was evident both in the overall findings and in those relative to the three possible loci. More specifically, in the English texts there were 7.23 nominal ellipses per 1000 words, 6.10 of which occurred initially, .77 medially, and .36

finally in the clause. In contrast, the Romanian texts displayed 25.04 nominal ellipses per 1000 words, of which 20.00 were initial, 3.26 medial, and 1.78 final in the clause. It follows, therefore, that the Romanian texts displayed far more nominal ellipses than the English ones both in terms of the overall tally and in terms of the locus-based tally.

The cross-linguistic analysis of nominal ellipses in terms of the syntax of the ellipsis-affected elements also revealed both overlap and differences between the two languages. One such similarity was that, in both the languages, subject ellipsis overwhelmingly occurred in clause-initial position – note that 6.5 of the 7.23 nominal ellipses per 1000 words in the English texts and 24.69 of the 25.04 in the Romanian texts, respectively, functioned as subjects of the clause.

The dissimilarity in terms of ratios of nominal ellipses mentioned in the locus-based discussion above became even more evident in the cross-linguistic analysis of nominal ellipses in terms of the syntactic function fulfilled by the left-out element, being particularly obvious with ellipses of nominal elements functioning as subject. Indeed, ellipsis of/within the subject was far more frequent in Romanian than in English – 24.69 vs. 6.50 per 1000 words. The reason behind this seems to lie in the different amounts of information concerning the grammatical subject carried by the verb forms in the two languages. Whereas the Romanian verb carries in it information relative to both the person and the number of the subject, which generally makes overt presence of the subject redundant, the English verb system displays little information about its subject. As a result, even though oftentimes a valid option, subject ellipsis in English written discourse is subject to a number of restrictions not normally operating in Romanian; hence the much

lower frequency of occurrence of subject ellipsis in the English texts, as compared with the Romanian ones.

Another considerable dissimilarity surfaced between the subject ellipses found in the English and those identified in Romanian. Namely, whereas the ellipsis of/within subjects occurring non-initially in the English texts were always in clause-medial position, the non-initial ellipted subjects in the Romanian texts occurred either clause-medially or clause-finally. The reason behind this seems to lie in the morphology of the noun phrase. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the English noun phrase has lost most of its inflections; this imposes strictness of word order and typically necessitates subjects to occur clause-initially, the only element normally preceding it being an adverbial. In contrast, the paradigm of the Romanian noun phrase is full, which makes it possible for a subject to occur anywhere in the clause. Given the anywhere nature of possible positions of the Romanian subject, ellipsis thereof is also possible in any of the loci – hence clause-finally, as well.

Similarities and dissimilarities between the two corpora also came to the fore during the analysis of the ellipses of/within nominals functioning as objects. More specifically, both the languages exhibited instances of ellipsis of nominals functioning as objects, and with both the languages object ellipsis was far less frequent than subject ellipsis (.72 vs. 6.51 per 1000 words in English, and .35 vs. 24.69 in Romanian, respectively). In this respect, therefore, the two languages converged.

On the other hand, object ellipses were either clause-medial or clause-final in English, with equal distribution thereof in the texts under study (8 instances each, representing .36 per 1000 words). In contrast, the Romanian texts displayed instances of object

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ellipsis in any of the three potential loci (initial, medial, or final), with a marked prefer-ence for clause-final object ellipses over either clause-medial or clause-initial ones. At the same time, the ratio of object ellipsis was ca. twice higher in the English texts than in the Romanian ones – .72 vs. .35 per 1000 words. The reason why this was the case seems to lie in the tendency for objectless transitive verbs in Romanian to turn intransitive – a shift that might have a bearing on their semantics.

4.2.2. Nominal ellipsis in terms of retrievability

The findings relative to nominal ellipses in terms of the recoverability of the left-out ele-ment are summarized in *Table 10* below.

Retrievability	Textual		Situational	Total
Texts	Anaphoric	Cataphoric		
English – frequency	152 (95.6%)	7 (4.4%)	–	159 (100%)
– ratio	6.92	.31		7.23
Romanian – frequency	519 (89.9%)	15 (2.6%)	43 (7.5%)	577 (100%)
– ratio	22.52	.65	1.87	25.04

Table 10. Nominal ellipses in terms of retrievability

As seen in *Table 10* above, the vast majority of the nominals involving ellipsis found in the texts under study were anaphoric in nature – that is, were retrievable from the previous discourse. Indeed, 152 (i.e., 95.6%) of the 159 nominal ellipses in the Eng-lish texts and 519 (i.e., 89.9%) of the 577 nominals affected by ellipsis identified in the Romanian texts were recovered anaphorically. Sentences [4.15] and [4.16] below are meant to illustrate instances of anaphorically-recoverable nominal ellipses isolated in the English and Romanian texts, respectively.

[4.15] At the back of his wagon *he* set a little anvil, and out of an oily tool box [*he*] dug
        a small machine hammer (Steinbeck, p.212).

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[4.16] *Trotuarul* era spart în mai multe locuri, şi pe anumite distanţe [*el*] nu se mai

cunoştea (Eliade, p.30)

Pavement-the was broken in several places, and on certain distances [*it*] not more

was known

'The pavement was broken in several places, and for certain stretches was un-

recognizable' (Eliade, p.31).

In both [4.15] and [4.16] above, the ellipted nominal elements *he* and *el* 'it,' respectively,

are retrieved from the previous discourse. In other words, they are anaphoric in nature.

Cataphoric ellipses and situational ellipses were far less frequent in either of the

languages. Indeed, there were seven cataphorically-retrievable (representing 4.4% of the

total number of nominal ellipses) and absolutely no situationally-retrievable nominals in

the English texts. As for the Romanian corpus, it exhibited 15 cataphorically- and 43

situationally-based nominal ellipses, which translate as 2.6% and 7.5%, respectively, of

the nominal ellipses identified therein. Sentences [4.17] and [4.18] below display cata-

phorically-retrievable nominal ellipses identified in the English and Romanian texts, re-

spectively, while [4.19] carries a situationally-recoverable nominal ellipsis found in one

of the Romanian texts.

[4.17] In this election, *Congressional* [*candidates*] and *presidential candidates* alike did

their best to skitter toward the center (NYT.A01, p.3 of 4).

[4.18] … actualii [*parlamentari*], dar mai ales viitorii *parlamentari*, îşi spuneau deja

senatori şi deputaţi (Adev.R03, p.2 of 7)

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... present-the [*MPs*], but especially future-the *MPs*, themselves were-styling already senators and deputies

'... the present, and especially the future, MPs already styled themselves senators and representatives'

[4.19] Brusc, îmi dă [*ideea*] prin gînd: "Dacă aş încerca...?" (Niculescu, p.76)

Suddenly, to-me goes [*idea*] through mind: "If would-1ˢᵗ-sg try...?"

'Suddenly there shoots through my mind: "Suppose I tried?" ' (Niculescu, p.77)

In [4.17] and [4.18] above, the left-out nominals *candidates* and *parlamentari* 'MPs' were both retrieved on the basis of their overt occurrence in the following discourse; hence their cataphoricity. Note that both these ellipses are partial, rather than total, in nature – witness the deictics *Congressional* and *actualii* 'the present-day' upgraded as heads of the noun phrase. As for the ellipsis of *ideea* 'the idea' in [4.19], its antecedent is not present in the neighboring discourse. As a result, it needs retrieving from the extralinguistic context; hence its label as situational.

Table 10 above reveals that the Romanian corpus carried both textually and situationally recoverable nominal ellipses. However, the frequency of textually recoverable nominals was predominant. In contrast, the English texts did not display any situationally recoverable nominal ellipses, the retrieval of all the nominal ellipses in the English corpus being textually based. The fact that, unlike the English texts, the Romanian corpus allowed situational retrievability of nominal ellipses to occur seems to have both objective and subjective roots. The objective nature lies in the morphological marking of the language. As for the subjective nature, it seems to have to do with the fact that the texts under analysis dealt with issues (e.g., air-raids and bombings) which, even though never

actually raised, were inherently active in the minds of both the speaker/writer and the listener/reader, and therefore were easy to retrieve.

The findings in the table also indicate that the written discourse samples in both the languages displayed preference for textual recoverability of ellipted nominals. Moreover, as seen in the table, of the two textually-based recoverabilities, anaphora had the lion's share in both the languages.

More insight into the issue of nominal ellipsis retrievability in English and Romanian will be gained in the subsections to come, where the retrievability factor is intersected with the syntactic function of the omitted nominals (see 4.2.2.1 for English, 4.2.2.2 for Romanian, and 4.2.2.3 for cross-linguistic considerations).

4.2.2.1. Nominal ellipses in terms of retrievability – English texts

The nominals affected by ellipsis identified in the English corpus were analyzed in terms of their recoverability and their syntactic function. The results are presented in *Table 11* below.

Retrievability Texts	Textual		Situational	Total
	Anaphoric	Cataphoric		
Subject – frequency	142	1	–	143
– ratio	6.46	.04		6.50
Object – frequency	10	6	–	16
– ratio	.46	.27		.73
Total – frequency	152	7	–	159
– ratio	6.92	.31		7.23

Table 11. Nominal ellipses in terms of retrievability and syntactic function – English texts

When read in terms of retrievability, *Table 11* above indicates that by far the most anaphorically-retrievable nominal ellipses identified in the English texts performed the syntactic function of subject – 142 of 152 (i.e., 93.4%). In contrast, only one of the seven

(i.e., 14.3%) cataphorically-recoverable nominals occurring in subject position was found to have undergone ellipsis. Sentence [4.20] below illustrates an instance of anaphoric subject ellipsis found in the English corpus, while sentence [4.21] is meant to exemplify cataphoric nominal ellipsis.

[4.20]   The crowd looked at him and *he* looked back at them and [*he*] did not like them at all (Bradbury, p.272).

[4.21]   In this election, *Congressional* [*candidates*] and *presidential candidates* alike did their best to skitter toward the center (NYT.A01, p.3 of 4).

The left-out subject in sentence [4.20] above is retrievable from the previous discourse; hence its anaphoric nature. As for the first instance of the noun *candidates* in sentence [4.21], it needs to be inferred from the discourse to come. It represents, therefore, an instance of cataphora. As mentioned before, cataphoric nominal ellipses tended to be partial, rather than total.

A retrievability-focused reading of *Table 11* will also reveal that the English texts yielded 10 anaphorically-based ellipted syntactic objects, representing 6.6% of the 152 instances of nominal anaphora identified in the English corpus, and six cataphorically-based ones, representing 85.7% of the seven instances of nominal cataphora encountered in the corpus. Sentences [4.22] and [4.23] below, taken from the English corpus, are meant to illustrate an instance of anaphoric and one of cataphoric object ellipsis, respectively.

[4.22]   'I'll get out *the car*. You can put on your coat while I'm starting [*it*]" (Steinbeck, p.214).

[4.23] Is American politics entering a *nonideological* [*phase*] or an *anti-ideological*

   phase? (NYT.A01, p.3 of 4)

In sentence [4.22] above, the left-out direct object *it* is retrieved from the immediately previous discourse; it follows then that it is recovered anaphorically. As for the ellipted direct object *phase* in sentence [4.23], it bases its recoverability in the discourse to immediately come; it is therefore cataphoric in nature. As in the case of the cataphoric subject ellipsis in [4.21] above, the cataphoric object ellipsis in [4.23] is partial, rather than total. Note that, as mentioned earlier in this study, no situationally-retrievable ellipses were found in the English texts, irrespective of their syntactic function.

When read in terms of the syntactic function of the left-out nominal, *Table 11* shows that the English corpus displayed 143 instances of ellipsis-involving subjects, of which the overwhelming majority (142, i.e., 99.3%) were anaphorically-recoverable, while the remaining one (i.e., .7%) was cataphoric in nature. As for the 16 ellipted objects found in the English texts, ten of them (i.e., 62.5%) were anaphoric in nature and six (i.e., 37.5%) were cataphoric.

Within anaphora there was a much greater number of subject ellipses than object ellipses. This seems to have been the outcome of the overwhelming preference for subject ellipsis in general. Interestingly, among the cataphoric ellipses isolated in the English texts there were more object ellipses than subject ellipses. This might be due to the fact that the number of conjoined object noun phrases prevailed over that of conjoined subject noun phrases. However, even in the case of object ellipsis, anaphoric retrievability was by far more common.

4.2.2.2. Nominal ellipses in terms of retrievability – Romanian texts

The findings concerning the sphere of recoverability of the ellipsis-affected nominals identified in the Romanian texts are summarized in *Table 12* below.

Texts	Retrievability	Textual		Situational	Total
		Anaphoric	Cataphoric		
Subject	– frequency	514	15	40	569
	– ratio	22.30	.65	1.74	24.69
Object	– frequency	5	–	3	8
	– ratio	.22		.13	.35
Total	– frequency	519	15	43	577
	– ratio	22.52	.65	1.87	25.04

Table 12. Nominal ellipses in terms of retrievability and syntactic function – Romanian texts

A retrievability-focused reading of *Table 12* above shows that of the 519 instances of anaphora involving nominals found in the Romanian texts, 514 (99%) fulfilled the syntactic role of subject. In contrast, the function of object was carried only by five (i.e., 1%) of the anaphorically-retrievable nominals. Examples [4.24] and [4.25] below illustrate anaphoricity within subjects and objects, respectively, in the Romanian texts.

[4.24] *Gore* îşi rezemase bărbia în palmă, zîmbitor. [*El*] Urmărea cu interes mişcările cîrciumarului (Eliade, p.12)

Gore to-himself had-propped chin-the in palm, smiling. [*He*] Was-following-3rd-sg with interest movements-the innkeeper-the-of

'Gore had propped his chin in his palm, smiling. He was following the innkeeper's movements with interest' (Eliade, p.13).

[4.25] La hotel *mă* dezbrac în grabă şi [*mă*] întind sub cearşaful răcoros (Niculescu, p.92)

At hotel *myself* undress-1st-sg and [*myself*] stretch under sheet-the cool

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'At the hotel I quickly undress and stretch myself out under the cool sheet' (Niculescu, p.93)

The left-out subject *el* 'he' in sentence [4.24] above is retrieved from the immediately previous discourse, and so is the ellipted object *mă* 'myself' in sentence [4.25]. Consequently, both these nominal ellipses are anaphoric in nature. Note that the omitted nominal in Romanian does not necessarily occur in the same sentence as its antecedent – sec [4.24] above, where the antecedent and the ellipsis site occur in different sentences.

At the same time, *Table 12* reveals that grammatical subjects also prevailed among situationally-retrievable nominal elements – note that 40 of the 43 (i.e., 93%) of the nominal ellipses identified in the Romanian texts were subjects, in sharp contrast with the merely three (i.e., 7%) that functioned as objects. Sentence [4.26] below provides an instance of situationally-retrievable subject identified in one of the Romanian texts, while sentence [4.27] illustrates one of situationally-retrievable object ellipsis.

[4.26] Brusc, îmi dă [*ideea*] prin gînd: "Dacă aş încerca...?" (Niculescu, p.76)

Suddenly, to-me goes [*idea*] through mind: "If would-1st-sg try...?"

'Suddenly there shoots through my mind: "Suppose I tried?" ' (Niculescu, p.77)

[4.27] Îl privesc întrebător... Aş vrea să mai întreb [*ceva*], dar s-a făcut seară (Niculescu, p.92)

Him watch-1st-sg questioningly... Would-1st-sg want to more ask [*something*], but has turned evening

'I look at him questioningly... I should like to ask more, but evening has come'
(Niculescu, p.93).

The nominal fulfilling the syntactic role of subject in [4.26] above has been left out. However, searching the neighboring text is no use: no element in the vicinity of the ellipsis site could fill the slot, in that the only eligible one (namely, the fragment *dacă aş încerca* 'suppose I tried') is object, rather than subject. Therefore, retrieval is only possible from the context; and the context makes it clear that it must (or at least should) be a noun phrase such as *ideea* 'idea' or the like.

The same is true about the ellipted nominal functioning as object in example [4.27], in that no element present in the neighboring discourse could fill the object slot left unoccupied – note that *mai* 'more' is an adverb, rather than an adjective, as the gloss and/or the English translation might suggest. This means that the left-out element can only be reinstated from the extralinguistic context. Both the ellipses in [4.26] and [4.27] above are, therefore, situational in nature.

Finally, *Table 12* above indicates that all the 15 instances of cataphora identified in the Romanian texts involved subjects, as in the case of sentence [4.28] below.

[4.28] ... actualii [*parlamentari*], dar mai ales viitorii *parlamentari*, îşi spuneau deja senatori şi deputaţi (Adev.R03, p.2 of 7)

... present-the [*MPs*], but especially future-the *MPs*, themselves were-styling already senators and deputies

'... the present, and especially the future, MPs already styled themselves senators and representatives'

In sentence [4.28] above, the first instance of the nominal *parlamentari* 'MPs' has been left out because of its identity both in form and in function with its immediately following second occurrence. Recovery is based in the forthcoming discourse; hence its

cataphoric nature. Note that, as in the case of the English texts discussed above, all the instances of cataphoric nominal ellipses found in the Romanian texts were partial, rather than total.

What the analysis of the Romanian texts brings to the fore, therefore, is that recovery of Romanian nominal ellipses lies either within the text, in which case differentiation can be made between anaphora and cataphora, or outside of the text. Based on the findings in the Romanian corpus, it seems that anaphora is much favored over situational retrievability, which in turn is preferred to cataphora. In terms of the syntactic role performed by the left-out nominal, subject ellipsis seems to be more common than object ellipsis in the case of both anaphora and situational retrievability; moreover, it appears to be the only possibility among the instances of cataphora. A further thing that surfaced in the analysis of the nominal ellipses in the Romanian texts was that ellipsis retrieval did not have to be intrasentential; rather, the antecedent and the ellipsis site quite often occurred in different sentences.

4.2.2.3. A retrievability-based cross-linguistic approach to nominal ellipses

A contrastive investigation of the two corpora revealed much similarity, but also some discrepancy in terms of the retrieval of the nominal ellipses identified therein. Thus, both the languages seem to favor ellipses of subjects over ellipses of objects where anaphoric retrieval is concerned. This suggests an overlap between the two languages. The preference for subject ellipsis over object ellipsis was especially evident in the Romanian corpus, where the instances of subject ellipsis not only occurred far more frequently than those of object ellipsis where recovery lay in the preceding discourse, but also greatly outnumbered those of object ellipsis where recovery was situational; moreover, only sub-

ject ellipses were found in the Romanian corpus where recovery was cataphoric. Note, in this respect, that the only outlying subcategory in the recoverability-based cross-linguistic analysis of nominal ellipsis to have surfaced in my study was that of English cataphora, which revealed a preference for object ellipsis to subject ellipsis. This preference for English nominal cataphora to fulfill the syntactic role of object, rather than of subject, represents one of the dissimilarities noted between English and Romanian nominal ellipses.

Another considerable dissimilarity displayed by the two corpora lies in the occurrence of situational ellipsis. Indeed, while present in the Romanian corpus, situationally-retrievable ellipses were absent from the English texts. This suggests that Romanian written discourse is open to situationally-recoverable nominal ellipsis, which English written discourse is not.

4.3. Verbal ellipsis

The findings relative to the instances of verbal ellipsis encountered in the two corpora are summarized in *Table 13* below.

Verbal ellipsis type		Number of ellipses	
		English	Romanian
Operator ellipsis	– frequency	10 (43.5%)	–
	– ratio	.45	
Main verb ellipsis	– frequency	8 (34.8%)	–
	– ratio	.37	
Gapping	– frequency	5 (21.7%)	30 (39.5%)
	– ratio	.23	1.30
Existential	– frequency	–	46 (60.5%)
	– ratio		2.00
Total	– frequency	23 (100%)	76 (100%)
	– ratio	1.05	3.30

Table 13. Verbal ellipses in the corpora under study

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As seen in *Table 13* above, the English texts exhibited 23 instances of ellipsis of/within verb groups. Three subtypes of verbal ellipsis were differentiated: operator ellipsis, main verb ellipsis, and whole-verb ellipsis (gapping). Among the three subtypes, the instances of operator ellipsis prevailed. Indeed, there were 10 such ellipses (representing 43.5% of the verbal ellipses); in terms of ratio, this translates as .45 per 1000 words. The second most frequent subtype was that of main verb ellipsis, which had eight (i.e., 34.8%) occurrences, which translates as a ratio of .37 per 1000 words. Finally, the least frequently occurring verbal ellipsis encountered in the English texts was gapping, which surfaced in five (i.e., 21.7%) instances and displayed a ratio of .23 per 1000 words.

As for the Romanian corpus, it displayed 76 instances of verbal ellipsis. As seen in *Table 13* above, two of the subtypes of verbal ellipsis (namely operator ellipsis and main verb ellipsis) never surfaced in the Romanian written discourse samples. However, the absence of these two verbal ellipsis subtypes was not a surprise. On the one hand, there is no operator category in Romanian; hence there can be no ellipsis thereof. On the other hand, main verb ellipsis has been identified as an English-only phenomenon (see van Oirsouw, 1987). Therefore, it is not surprising that it does not turn up in languages other than English.

As for gapping, it had 30 occurrences in the Romanian texts, which means that 39.5% (i.e., a ratio of 1.30 per 1000 words) of the 76 verbal ellipses identified in these texts could be accounted for in terms of the pre-established taxonomy. The remaining 46 (i.e., 60.5%; 2.00 per 1000 words, ratio-wise) were neither operator ellipses nor main verb ellipses nor instances of gapping, nevertheless; rather, they belonged to the new subtype of verbal ellipsis discussed in Chapter 3. As mentioned earlier, this subcategory was

labeled 'existential' in virtue of the fact that the left-out verb forms necessarily denoted existence. Sentences [4.29] and [4.30] below provide instantiations of existential ellipses found in the Romanian texts.

[4.29] Un bec murdar atîrna de tavan; o căldare cu apă și cîțiva saci de nisip *se aflau* așezați lîngă pereți. În mijlocul odaiei [*se aflau*] două bănci de lemn (Eliade, p.16)

A bulb dirty hung from ceiling; a bucket with water and a-few bags of sand *lay* set near walls. In middle-the room-the-of [*lay*] two benches of wood

'A dirty bulb hung from the ceiling; a bucket of water and some sandbags were set against the walls. In the middle of the room were two wooden benches' (Eliade, p.17).

[4.30] Nu *era* nici o veselie. [*Erau*] Fețe lungi, discuții pe bisericuțe, într-o cameră strâmtă de la etajul doi al sediului (Adev.R03, p.3 of 7)

Not *was* not one rejoicing. [*Were*] Faces long, discussions on small-groups, in-a room small from floor two of headquarters-the-of

'There was no rejoicing. Long faces, small group small talk, in a small room on the second floor of the headquarters.'

The ellipted elements in sentences [4.29] and [4.30] above are forms of the existential verbs *a se afla* 'to lie/to exist/to be (found)' and *a fi* 'to be.' More specifically, they are the preterite forms *se aflau* 'lay' and *erau* 'were,' respectively. The ellipted existential *se aflau* 'lay' in [4.29] could pass for an instance of gapping – note that the left-out element *se aflau* 'lay' should, if reinstated, go between the preposed adverbial *în mijlocul odaiei* 'in the middle of the room' and the postposed subject *două bănci de lemn* 'two

wooden benches.' However, the verbal ellipsis in [4.30] did not fall under any of the sub-types of verbal ellipsis in my pre-established nomenclature. Indeed, it could not be coded as an instance of gapping, in that gapping is defined as leaving out a verb form from be-tween the subject and the object/adverbial (which was definitely not the case in [4.30], where the ellipsis was clause-initial and therefore had no element preposed to it), and it did not belong to operator ellipsis or main verb ellipsis, either, since neither of these sub-types can exist in Romanian; hence the need for a new label.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, no existential verbal ellipses were found in the Eng-lish texts. This does not mean that existential verbs did not ellipt in English. However, when ellipsis of an existential occurred in English, it always denoted a complex ellipsis, in that the subject ellipted along with the existential verb. To learn more about subject-and-existential complex ellipsis, see subsection 4.4.1.1 below.

More things can be found out about verbal ellipsis and the way it works in the two languages by examining the ellipsis subtype factor in terms of the other two criteria un-derlying the present study, namely locus and retrievability. Subsections 4.3.1, where the locus in the clause is the central issue, and 4.3.2, where the focus is on the retrievability of ellipsis, offer more details about my findings in this respect.

4.3.1. Verbal ellipses in terms of locus

The results arrived at upon analyzing the verbal ellipses in the two corpora in terms of their locus in the clause are summarized in *Table 14* below.

	Locus	Initial	Medial	Final	Total
English	– frequency	5 (21.7%)	11 (47.8%)	7 (30.4%)	23 (100%)
	– ratio	.23	.50	.32	1.05
Romanian	– frequency	24 (31.6%)	52 (68.4%)	–	76 (100%)
	– ratio	1.04	2.26		3.30

Table 14. Verbal ellipses in terms of locus

As seen in *Table 14* above, the verbal ellipses identified in the English corpus showed preference for medial position over the other two potential loci. Indeed, 11 (i.e., 47.8%) of the verbal ellipses in the English texts occurred medially in the clause, as opposed to seven (i.e., 30.4%) that were clause-final and the five (i.e., 21.7%) that occurred clause-initially. The preference for medial position was even more pronounced among the 76 verbal ellipses found in the Romanian texts, 52 (i.e., 68.4%) of which occurred clause-medially. This preference seems to stem out of the tendency for verbs in the two languages to occupy clause-medial position.

On the other hand, whereas in the English written discourse samples verbal ellipses were found to occur in any of the loci, in the Romanian ones they were encountered either initially or medially in the clause, but not clause-finally. This seems to indicate that clause-final verbal ellipsis is scarce, if at all possible, in the Romanian language.

For a more thorough consideration of verbal ellipsis loci in English and Romanian, see subsections 4.3.1.1 through 4.3.1.3 below.

4.3.1.1. Verbal ellipses in terms of subtype and locus – English texts

The findings of the cross-analysis of the verbal ellipses found in the English texts in terms of ellipsis subtype and position occupied in the clause are given in *Table 15* below.

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Ellipsis subtype	Locus	Initial	Medial	Final	Total
Operator	– frequency	4	6	–	10
	– ratio	.18	.27		.45
Main verb	– frequency	1	–	7	8
	– ratio	.05		.32	.37
Gapping	– frequency	–	5	–	5
	– ratio		.23		.23
Total	– frequency	5	11	7	23
	– ratio	.23	.50	.32	1.05

Table 15. Verbal ellipses in terms of ellipsis subtype and locus – English texts

If read in terms of the locus in the clause of the ellipted verbal element, *Table 15* above reveals that in the English corpus under study all three clause-positions were open to ellipsis. A detailed analysis shows that clause-initial verbal ellipses could translate as operator ellipsis, as in [4.31] below, or as main verb ellipsis – see [4.32] below. In contrast, clause-initial verbal ellipsis never equated with gapping.

[4.31] "She'd sure like to have some, ma'am. [*Did/Would*] You say they're nice ones?"

(Steinbeck, p.210)

[4.32] "*Look* at them. [*Do*] Not [*look*] at the cars," said Spallner (Bradbury, p.276).

In example [4.31] above, the only element undergoing ellipsis was the operator; hence the label operator ellipsis assigned onto it. It should be noted here that in some perspectives on grammar, the second sentence in [4.31] is not even elliptical in nature. However, I coded it as operator ellipsis in virtue of my preference for traditional syntax. As suggested by example [4.31], at times there was a certain vacillation as to what/which the exact operator that had been left out of the discourse was. This vacillation did not impede the accuracy of the tally, nevertheless; whatever the ellipted form, it still was an operator ellipsis occurring clause-initially.

As for sentence [4.32], I coded it as an instance of clause-initial main verb ellipsis in virtue of the fact that in some dialects of English left-out negative imperatives might not necessarily involve an operator (cf., *[Look] Not at the cars*). Note that this was the only instance of clause-initial main verb ellipsis identified in the English texts.

The second possible locus (namely, the clause-medial one) was encountered both with operator ellipsis, as in the case of [4.33] below, and with gapping – see example [4.34] below. On the other hand, clause-medial position never surfaced as main clause ellipsis. Note the remarkably balanced distribution (6 vs. 5) of clause-medial verbal ellipses between operator ellipsis and gapping.

[4.33] Mr. Nader's once-stellar reputation among liberals *has been* permanently *tarnished*, his ability to raise money and to work with Democrats *[has been]* forever *damaged* (NYT.A04, p.2 of 4).

[4.34] A Brentwood accident *will bring out* one group. A Huntington Park [*will bring out*] another (Bradbury, p.277).

Sentence [4.33] above exemplifies operator ellipsis. As seen therein, both the second instance of the perfective operator *has* and the second instance of the passive auxiliary *been* were left out; on the other hand, the main verb *tarnished* was left intact. Note that, as seen in this particular instance, at times it was not only the operator, but also a subsequent auxiliary, that underwent ellipsis; in most of the instances, nevertheless, operator ellipsis entailed ellipsis of the operator only. Whereas the tendency toward ellipsis of the two auxiliaries in [4.33] above (*has* and *been*, respectively) is accounted for by

their overt presence in the preceding discourse, the non-elliptable nature of the main verb *tarnished* seems to lie in its lack of retrievability, be it textual or situational.

Sentence [4.34] above illustrates whole-verb ellipsis (gapping). As seen in the example, gapping entails total deletion of a verb group occurring from between the subject and the object and/or adverbial. As seen in [4.34] above, no part whatsoever of the verb group is left behind.

Lastly, the English corpus exhibited seven instances of clause-final verbal ellipsis, all of which involved main verbs. No occurrences whatsoever of either clause-final operator ellipsis or clause-final gapping were noticed in the texts under study. The only examples of clause-final verbal ellipsis were main verb ellipses, as seen in [4.35] below.

[4.35] I *don't know*, I really *don't* [*know*] (Bradbury, p.276).

Along with the approach in terms of locus made above, *Table 15* also allows a reading in terms of the subtype of verbal ellipsis. In terms of this reading, the table shows that operator ellipsis had four clause-initial occurrences and six clause-medial ones. Examples [4.31] and [4.33] above illustrate operator ellipses occurring clause-initially and clause-medially, respectively. On the other hand, operator ellipsis had no occurrence whatsoever in clause-final position. This might be indicative of constraints existing in the language against clause-final operator ellipsis.

As far as the other possible verbal ellipsis subtypes are concerned, main verb ellipsis had one occurrence in clause-initial position and seven occurrences in clause-final position, while gapping only surfaced clause-medially in the corpus under analysis. This seems to suggest that neither clause-medial main verb ellipsis nor gapping occurring in positions other than clause-medial is very common in English. Clause-initial and clause-

final main verb ellipses are illustrated in [4.32] and [4.35] above, respectively, while gapping is exemplified in [4.34] above.

The findings outlined above seem to suggest the presence in the English language of certain restrictions as to what subtypes of verbal ellipses can occur where. Thus, it appears that there is an incompatibility between operator ellipsis and clause-final position, between main verb ellipsis and clause-medial position, and between gapping and either clause-initial or clause-final position, respectively. However, while the first two of the restrictions presented above are, if confirmed, language-related, the incompatibility between gapping and either clause-initial or clause-final position is one deriving from the very definition of gapping, rather than from restrictions imposed by the language itself.

4.3.1.2. Verbal ellipses in terms locus – Romanian texts

The findings obtained upon analyzing the verbal ellipses identified in the Romanian corpus in terms of subtype of ellipsis and locus thereof are presented in *Table 16* below.

Locus Ellipsis subtype		Initial	Medial	Final	Total
Operator		–	–	–	–
Main verb		–	–	–	–
Gapping	– frequency	–	30	–	30
	– ratio		1.30		1.30
Existential	– frequency	24	22	–	46
	– ratio	1.04	.96		2.00
Total	– frequency	24	52	–	76
	– ratio	1.04	2.26		3.30

Table 16. Verbal ellipses in terms of ellipsis subtype and locus – Romanian texts

When read in terms of the clause-locus involved, *Table 16* above indicates that all the 24 ellipses occurring clause-initially in the Romanian corpus entailed an existential verb – see [4.36] below.

[4.36] Nu *era* nici o veselie. [*Erau*] Feţe lungi, discuţii pe bisericuţe, într-o cameră

strâmtă de la etajul doi al sediului (Adev.R03, p.3 of 7)

Not *was* not one rejoicing. [*Were*] Faces long, discussions on small-groups, in-a

room small from floor-the two of headquarters-the-of

'There was no rejoicing. Long faces, small group small talk, in a small room on

the second floor of the headquarters.'

In example [4.36] above, the verbal ellipsis occurring in initial position entails the verb

form *erau* '(there) were,' which denotes existence. Note that no verbs other than the exis-

tentials were ever found to have ellipted in clause-initial position.

As for clause-medial position, it was encountered both with gapping and with ex-

istential ellipses. Note, in this respect, that 30 (i.e., 57.7%) of the 52 instances of clause-

medial verbal ellipsis involved gapping, while 22 (i.e., 42.3%) involved ellipsis of an ex-

istential verb. Sentence [4.37] below illustrates an instance of gapping, while [4.38] ex-

emplifies one of clause-medial existential ellipsis.

[4.37] ... televiziunile *se băteau* pentru prioritate la transmisiile în direct, iar vârfurile

PRM [*se băteau*] pentru un loc în cadru (Adev.R03, p.2 of 7)

... televisions *were fighting* for priority at broadcasts in direct, and heads-the GRP

(the Greater Romania Party)-of [*were fighting*] for a place in frame

'...TV stations were fighting over priority to live broadcasts, and the GRP heads

over room in the close-up.'

[4.38] Un bec murdar atîrna de tavan; o căldare cu apă şi cîţiva saci de nisip *se aflau*

aşezaţi lîngă pereţi. În mijlocul odaiei [*se aflau*] două bănci de lemn (Eliade, p.16)

A bulb dirty hung from ceiling; a bucket with water and a-few bags of sand *lay* set

near walls. In middle-the room-the-of [*lay*] two benches of wood

'A dirty bulb hung from the ceiling; a bucket of water and some sandbags were

set against the walls. In the middle of the room were two wooden benches' (Eli-

ade, p.17).

In both [4.37] and [4.38] above, the left-out element was a clause-medial verb

group – *se băteau* 'were fighting' in [4.37] and *se aflau* 'lay' in [4.38]. The medial nature

of the ellipsis of both *se băteau* 'were fighting' and *se aflau* 'lay' is pinpointed by the

overt presence in the text of both the preceding element (*televiziunile* 'the TV stations' in

[4.37] and *în mijlocul odaiei* 'in the middle of the room' in [4.38]) and the subsequent

element (*pentru un loc în cadru* 'over room in the close-up' in [4.37] and *două bănci de*

lemn 'two wooden benches' in [4.38]). The only difference between [4.37] and [4.38] lies

in the nature of the left-out verb: whereas the verb in [4.37] denotes an action, the verb in

[4.38] denotes existence.

When interpreted in terms of the subtype of verbal ellipsis, *Table 16* above shows

that, as expected, given its definition, all the instances of gapping yielded by the Roma-

nian texts occurred clause-medially – see sentence [4.37] above. As for the elided exis-

tentials, they were almost evenly split between clause-initial position and clause-medial

position. More specifically, 24 of the 46 existential ellipses (i.e., 52.2%) occurred clause-

initially, as in the case of *erau* '(there) were' in [4.37] above, while the other 22 (i.e.,

47.8%) occupied clause-medial position in the clause – see *se aflau* 'lay' in [4.38] above.

Based on the findings outlined above, it seems that Romanian does not have either

operator ellipsis or main verb ellipsis – note that no instances of either were identified in

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the Romanian corpus. In contrast, Romanian readily allows gapping – note the numerous instances thereof reported in *Table 16* above. In addition, the Romanian texts presented a large number of ellipses which did not fall under any of the pre-established subtypes of verbal ellipses (operator ellipsis, main verb ellipsis, and/or gapping, respectively); hence the imperative for creating a new subcategory of verbal ellipsis. The fact that a closer study of these ellipses revealed that all the verbs involved therein were existential verbs called for the label 'existential' assigned onto the newly-established verbal ellipsis sub-category.

Other than the resistance to operator ellipses and main verb ellipses, the Romanian texts also showed a lack of any verbal ellipsis occurring in clause-final position. The fact that there surfaced no operator ellipses, no main verb ellipses, and no verbal ellipses whatsoever in clause-final position in the Romanian written discourse samples under discussion seems to indicate strict restrictions in the language vis-à-vis these instances of verbal ellipsis. Another restriction noted in the Romanian texts related to gapping, which only occurred in clause-medial position. However, as mentioned earlier in this thesis, this restriction is rooted in the definition of gapping per se, rather than in any language-internal rules that might be operating in Romanian.

4.3.1.3. A locus-based cross-linguistic approach to verbal ellipses

A cross-linguistic study of the findings in the two corpora revealed that both English and Romanian tend to use verbal ellipses. However, reliance thereon differs – note that the Romanian texts displayed more than three times as many verbal ellipses as the English texts (3.30 vs. 1.05 per 1000 words).

The only similarity found in the two corpora under analysis concerned the usage and locus of gapping – always clause-medial in either language. Other than that, the findings concerning the verbal ellipses isolated in the texts only pointed to dissimilarities between the two languages. Thus, whereas the English texts allowed for both operator ellipsis and main verb ellipsis, the Romanian ones exhibited neither. The reason accounting for the absence in Romanian of operator ellipsis lies in that in Romanian there exist no operators – and only things that exist in the language can ellipt. As for the reason underlying the absence in the Romanian corpus of main verb ellipsis, it lies in the English-specific nature of main verb ellipsis as a phenomenon per se.

Also, whereas English allowed for any clause position (albeit with certain constraints, in that no operator ellipsis ever occurred clause-finally and no main verb ellipsis ever occupied clause-medial position), the Romanian corpus displayed no clause-final verbal ellipses whatsoever. This suggests incompatibility between Romanian verbal ellipsis and clause-final position.

On the other hand, the verbal ellipses found in the Romanian texts imposed the creation of a new subtype of verbal ellipsis – namely, that of existential ellipsis, which occurred in either of the loci seemingly compatible with Romanian verbal ellipsis: clause-initial and clause-medial. Note that none of the verbal ellipses found in the English corpus belonged to the subcategory of existential ellipsis. This seems to indicate a fourth dissimilarity between English verbal ellipses and Romanian verbal ellipsis.

4.3.2. Verbal ellipses in terms of retrievability

The findings arrived at upon considering the verbal ellipses in the two corpora in terms of their retrievability are presented in *Table 17* below.

	Retrievability	Textual		Situational	Total
Language		Anaphoric	Cataphoric		
English	– frequency	10 (43.5%)	–	13 (56.5%)	23 (100%)
	– ratio	.45		.60	1.05
Romanian	– frequency	36 (47.4%)	–	40 (52.6%)	76 (100%)
	– ratio	1.56		1.74	3.30

Table 17. Verbal ellipses in terms of retrievability

Table 17 above shows that the retrieval of the verbal ellipses found in the English texts was based either textually (10 of 23, i.e., 43.5%) or situationally (13 of 23, i.e., 56.5%). This statistical finding suggests equilibrium between the two spheres of recoverability. Notice must be made here, at the same time, of the fact that all the instances of textually-recoverable verbal ellipses in the English texts were anaphoric in nature. Indeed, no cataphora ever emerged in the English corpus under investigation.

As seen in *Table 17* above, the Romanian corpus yielded no cataphorically-retrievable instances of verbal ellipsis, either. As for the anaphoric vs. situational retrievability of verbal ellipses, it was also remarkably balanced – somewhat less than half (36 of 76, i.e., 47.4%) of the verbal ellipses in the Romanian texts were anaphoric in nature, and somewhat more than half (40 of 76, i.e., 52.6%) entailed retrieval from the extra-linguistic context.

4.3.2.1. Verbal ellipses in terms of retrievability – English texts

The study in terms of ellipsis subtype and retrievability of the verbal ellipses encountered in the English texts yielded the results presented in *Table 18* below.

Retrievability / Ellipsis subtype		Textual		Situational	Total
		Anaphoric	Cataphoric		
Operator	– frequency	2	–	8	10
	– ratio	.09		.36	.45
Main verb	– frequency	6	–	2	8
	– ratio	.27		.10	.37
Gapping	– frequency	2	–	3	5
	– ratio	.09		.14	.23
Total	– frequency	10	–	13	23
	– ratio	.45		.60	1.05

Table 18. Verbal ellipses in terms of ellipsis subtype and retrievability – English texts

Table 18 above reveals that both anaphoric retrieval and situational retrieval were valid options across the three subtypes of verbal ellipsis met with in the English texts. Indeed, anaphoric recovery was encountered among operator ellipses, main verb ellipses, and instances of gapping alike. More specifically, of the ten instances of verbal anaphora identified in the English texts, two (i.e., 20%) denoted operator ellipses, six (i.e., 60%) affected a main verb, and two (i.e., 20%) involved instances of gapping. Sentences [4.39], [4.40], and [4.41] below are meant to illustrate anaphoric retrievability of an operator, a main verb, and a whole verb group, respectively.

[4.39] Mr. Nader's once-stellar reputation among liberals *has been* permanently *tarnished*, his ability to raise money and to work with Democrats [*has been*] forever *damaged* (NYTimes.A04, p.2 of 4).

[4.40] I *don't know*, I really *don't* [*know*] (Bradbury, p.276).

[4.41] A Brentwood accident *will bring out* one group. A Huntington Park [*will bring out*] another (Bradbury, p.277).

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In sentences [4.39] through [4.41] above, the left-out verbal elements (*has been,* *know,* and *will bring out,* respectively) all based their retrieval in their overt occurrence in the previous discourse. Therefore, they were all anaphoric in nature.

Along with anaphoric recoverability, situational recoverability was also present within each of the subtypes of verbal ellipsis identified in the English texts. In this respect, my statistics show that of the 13 instances of situational retrievability, eight (i.e., 61.5%) involved operator ellipsis, two (i.e., 15.4%) entailed main-verb ellipses, and three (i.e., 23.1%) translated as gapping. Sentences [4.42] through [4.44] below provide instances of situationally-recoverable operator ellipsis, main-verb ellipsis, and gapping, respectively.

[4.42] "She'd sure like to have some, ma'am. [*Did/Would*] You say they're nice ones?"
(Steinbeck, p.210)

[4.43] That street was empty. Not a soul in sight. And then the accident [*occurred*]
and… all those faces [*were*] over me, quick, in no time (Bradbury, p.273).

[4.44] This campaign will spawn dozens of what-might-have-been scenarios, but few
[*are/could prove*] more poignant than this (WP.A01, p.3 of 7).

In sentences [4.42] through [4.44] above, none of the left-out verbal elements is present in the neighboring discourse, be it previous or subsequent. It follows therefore that each of these ellipses bases its retrieval, not in the neighboring text, but in the extralinguistic context; hence their situational nature. Note nevertheless that, as mentioned earlier in this thesis, not all the orientations to grammar will recognize the elliptical nature of the second sentence in [4.42] above, and also that situational recovery can at times give

rise to ambiguity as to the exact word to be used as a slot-filler – see [4.42] and [4.44] above. However, this ambiguity does not engender ellipsis incomprehensibility.

The second possible reading of *Table 17* above is subtype-focused. Indeed, if considered in terms of the verbal ellipsis subtypes that surfaced in the English texts, the table reveals that while none of the subtypes was ever retrieved cataphorically, each subtype had instances where retrieval was anaphoric as well as instances where it was situational. Thus, two (i.e., 20%) of the ten instances of operator ellipsis in the English texts were anaphoric, as in the case of [4.39] above, and eight (i.e., 80%) were situational – see [4.42] above. Also, six (i.e., 75%) of the eight instances of main verb ellipsis were anaphoric in nature, as in the case of *know* in [4.40] above, while the remaining two (i.e., 25%) were situational – see *occurred* in sentence [4.43] above. Finally, two (i.e., 40%) of the five instances of gapping identified in the English texts were anaphoric (see *will bring out* in [4.41] above), while the other three (i.e., 60%) were situational – see *are/could prove* in [4.44] above.

As may have become clear from the discussion above, the study in terms of ellipsis subtype and retrievability of the verbal ellipses identified in the English corpus indicates that, while any of the ellipsis subtypes can root its retrieval either in the previous discourse or in the extralinguistic context, it seems that cataphora is disfavored among English verbal ellipses – note that no cataphoric verbal ellipses whatsoever were identified in the English corpus. Other than that, whereas my analysis showed no preference for either anaphoricity or situational retrievability in terms of gapping, it also revealed that operator ellipsis seems to prefer situational retrieval, while main verb prefers anaphoric retrieval. Note nevertheless that (as mentioned earlier in this study), not all the perspec-

tives on grammar will accept the instances labeled as situational operator ellipses in this study as elliptical constructions.

4.3.2.2. Verbal ellipses in terms of retrievability – Romanian texts

The findings of the analysis in terms of retrievability of the verbal ellipses found in the Romanian texts are given in *Table 19* below.

Retrievability Ellipsis subtype		Textual		Situational	Total
		Anaphoric	Cataphoric		
Operator		–	–	–	–
Main verb		–	–	–	–
Gapping	– frequency	25	–	5	30
	– ratio	1.08		.22	1.30
Existential	– frequency	11	–	35	46
	– ratio	.48		1.52	2.00
Total	– frequency	36	–	40	76
	– ratio	1.56		1.74	3.30

Table 19. Verbal ellipses in terms of ellipsis subtype and retrievability – Romanian texts

Table 19 above indicates that anaphoric and situational retrieval alike were valid options for both the instances of gapping and the existential ellipses identified in the Romanian texts. However, when considered in more detail, the table reveals that anaphoric retrieval greatly prevailed among the instances of gapping. Note, in this respect, that as many as 25 (i.e., 83.3%; 1.08 per 1000 words) of the 30 instances of gapping in the Romanian texts were anaphoric in nature, as in the case of sentence [4.45] below, as opposed to the merely five (i.e., 16.7%; .22 per 1000 words) whose retrieval was based situationally, as in [4.46] below.

[4.45] … televiziunile *se băteau* pentru prioritate la transmisiile în direct, iar vârfurile

PRM [*se băteau*] pentru un loc in cadru (Adev.R03, p.2 of 7)

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... televisions *were fighting* for priority at broadcasts in direct, and heads-the GRP

(the Greater Romania Party)-of [*were fighting*] for a place in frame

'...TV stations were fighting over priority to live broadcasts, and the GRP heads

over room in the close-up.'

[4.46] N-au lipsit nici de această dată celebrele probleme cu tușul și ștampilele dispărute.

La capitolul victime – [*intră*] un alegător bihorean, care a decedat în fața secției

de votare (Adev.R02, p.1 of 1)

Not-have lacked neither on this time famous-the problems with ink-the and

stamps-the vanished. To chapter-the victims [*enters/belongs*] a voter Bihorean,

who deceased in face-the precinct-the-of of voting

'The famous problems concerning the vanished ink and stamps did not lack this

time, either. To the heading victims belongs a voter from Bihor County, who

passed away in front of the poll station.'

Insertion of the verb form *se băteau* 'were fighting' left out of sentence [4.45]

above was accounted for by its overt presence in the previous discourse. Therefore, the

ellipsis of *se băteau* 'were fighting' was coded as anaphoric. On the other hand, the verb

form missing from [4.46] above (in all likelihood, *intră* 'enters/belongs') was not present

anywhere in the discourse, and its insertion was based in the extralinguistic context. As a

result, the ellipsis in [4.46] was labeled as situational.

Whereas anaphora seemed to be preferred among instances of gapping, existential

ellipses were prevalently situational in nature. Indeed, only 11 (23.9%; .48 per thousand)

of the 46 existential ellipses in the Romanian corpus based their retrieval in the neighbor-

ing discourse (see example [4.47] below), as contrasted with the 35 (i.e., 76.1%; 1.52 per

1000 words) that were retrieved from the extralinguistic context, as in the case of example [4.48] below.

[4.47] Un bec murdar atîrna de tavan; o căldare cu apă și cîțiva saci de nisip *se aflau* așezați lîngă pereți. În mijlocul odaiei [*se aflau*] două bănci de lemn (Eliade, p.16)

A bulb dirty hung from ceiling; a bucket with water and a-few bags of sand *lay* set near walls. In middle-the room-the-of [*lay*] two benches of wood

'A dirty bulb hung from the ceiling; a bucket of water and some sandbags were set against the walls. In the middle of the room were two wooden benches' (Eliade, p.17).

[4.48] Intru în uliță și merg încet, privind peste ziduri, casă cu casă. [*Sînt*] Numai obloane trase, peste tot – și [*nu e*] nimeni (Niculescu, p.96)

Enter-1st-sg in lane and walk-1st-sg slowly, looking over walls, house by house. [*Are*] Only shutters drawn, everywhere – and [*not is*] anyone

'I go into the lane and walk slowly, looking over walls, house by house. Only shutters everywhere – and nobody' (Niculescu, p.97).

The overt presence in the previous discourse of the verb form *se aflau* 'lay' in sentence [4.47] above made its retrieval anaphoric. In contrast, the two forms of the left-out existential *a fi* 'to be' in example [4.48] – *sînt* '(there) are' and *nu e* '(there) isn't,' respectively – were not found elsewhere in the text. As a result, their insertion entailed understanding of the extralinguistic context; hence the label situational assigned to them.

Along with the subtype-based approach undertaken above, *Table 19* also accepts an approach in terms of the recoverability of the verbal ellipses occurring in the Roma-

nian texts. A retrievability-focused reading of the table indicates that anaphora prevailed among the instances of gapping, whereas situational recoverability was more common with existential ellipses. Indeed, 25 (i.e., 69.4%; 1.08 per 1000 words) of the 36 instances of anaphora encountered in the Romanian texts involved gapping, as in the case of [4.45] above, as opposed to the 11 (i.e., 30.6%; .48 per 1000 words) instances where it entailed an existential verb, as in example [4.47] above. Also, 35 (i.e., 87.5%; 1.52 per 1000 words) of the 40 instances of verbal ellipsis necessitating situational retrieval involved an existential verb, as in example [4.48] above, as opposed to the merely five (i.e., 12.5%; .22 per 1000 words) where it involved gapping, as in [4.46] above.

The findings in the texts under scrutiny show that the Romanian texts displayed neither operator ellipses nor main verb; indeed, whenever a verbal ellipsis occurred in the Romanian texts, it involved a whole verb, rather than a mere part of it. This does not mean, however, that all the verbal ellipses occurring in Romanian were instances of gapping. Along with gapping, the Romanian corpus also exhibited quite a few existential ellipses, i.e., ellipses wherein the left-out verbs denoted existence (typically, but not exclusively, the verb *a fi* 'to be').

The findings in the corpus under study also suggest that cataphora might not be a valid option in Romanian. Indeed, not a single instance of cataphorically-recoverable verbal ellipsis was found in the Romanian texts. As for the other two types of retrievability, even though both the anaphoric one and the extralinguistic one were encountered with either subtype of verbal ellipsis, it seems that Romanian prefers gapping to be anaphoric and existential ellipsis to be situational.

4.3.2.3. A retrievability-based cross-linguistic approach to verbal ellipses

The retrievability-based approach to the verbal ellipses in the two corpora revealed some likeness, and especially a lot of dissimilarity, between English and Romanian. What the two languages have in common is that, while they both allow anaphoric and situational recoverability, neither seems to admit cataphorically-retrievable verbal ellipses.

Other than that, it seems that there is little that the two languages have in common. For example, one of the dissimilarities that surfaced during the analysis of the verbal ellipses found in the written discourse samples taken from the two languages had to do with the subtypes of ellipsis occurring therein. More specifically, whereas the English texts displayed operator ellipsis, main verb ellipsis, and whole-verb ellipsis (gapping) alike, the Romanian texts only provided instances of gapping, while displaying no instances whatsoever of either operator ellipsis or main verb ellipsis. Moreover, the Romanian corpus brought to the fore a subcategory of verbal ellipsis that did not fall under any of the pre-established subtypes of verbal ellipses. This subcategory, which imposed the creation and labeling of a new ellipsis subtype, only involved existential verbs; hence the label 'existential' assigned onto it. Note that none of the instances of verbal ellipses identified in the English texts fell under the newly-established ellipsis subcategory. This does not mean that existential verbs did not ellipt in the English texts. Rather, it means that where ellipsis of an existential verb was the case, ellipsis was complex, i.e., it involved deletion of the subject along with that of the existential verb (see subsection 4.4.1.1 below).

Both the corpora under study displayed a certain tendency for certain subtypes of verbal ellipsis to favor a certain sphere of retrievability over the other. This likeness be-

tween the two languages is extremely meager, in that even the only verbal ellipsis sub-type met with in both the corpora – namely, gapping – exhibited quite unlike tendencies: in English, it seemed to have no preference for either, while in Romanian it distinctly favored anaphora over situational recoverability. Other than that, English seemed to prefer operator ellipses to be situational and main verb ellipses to be anaphoric in nature, while Romanian tended to favor situationally-retrievable existential ellipses over anaphorically-recoverable ones.

4.4. Complex ellipses

As already mentioned in this study, a complex ellipsis is defined as one affecting syntactic complexes. In keeping with that, an ellipsis found in the corpora under analysis was labeled as complex if it entailed deletion of/within a subject and verb complex, deletion of a verb and its object(s), deletion of a whole predicate (meaning that all that is left of the clause is the subject), or deletion of a subject and a predicate, with a complementizer left over to mark the ellipsis site. Note that this latter subtype of complex ellipsis is normally referred to as 'sluicing' in the literature of the field – a label also adopted here.

The findings obtained upon analyzing the instances of complex ellipsis met with in the two corpora are presented in *Table 20* below.

Language Complex ellipsis subtype		English	Romanian
Subject-and-verb	– frequency – ratio	29 (19.2%) 1.32	37 (80.4%) 1.60
Subject-and-existential	– frequency – ratio	69 (45.7%) 3.14	–
Subject-and-operator	– frequency – ratio	41 (27.2%) 1.86	–
Verb-and-object	– frequency – ratio	1 (.6%) .04	2 (4.3%) .09
Whole-predicate	– frequency – ratio	9 (6%) .42	5 (10.9%) .22
Sluicing	– frequency – ratio	2 (1.3%) .09	2 (4.3%) .09
Total	·· frequency – ratio	151 (100%) 6.87	46 (100%) 2.00

Table 20. Complex ellipses in the texts under analysis

A quick look at *Table 20* above will reveal two important things. First, it will reveal that the English texts displayed a lot more instances of complex ellipses. Indeed, there were 151 complex ellipses tallied in the English texts (ratio of 6.87 per 1000 words), but only 46 (2.00 per 1000 words) in the Romanian texts. This means that there were almost 3.5 times as many complex ellipses in the English texts as in the Romanian ones. Second, it will reveal that whereas all the complex ellipsis subtypes in my nomenclature were identified in the English texts, two of them (namely, subject-and-existential ellipsis and subject-and-operator ellipsis) never surfaced in the Romanian texts. The absence of the former is accounted for by the fact that, as seen above, Romanian existential verbs do not need an overt subject; hence the necessarily verbal nature of any ellipsis involving an existential. As for the subject-and-operator ellipsis subcategory, it cannot exist in Romanian because, as mentioned in subsection 4.3 above, the operator category is, pure and simple, not present in the paradigm of the Romanian verb.

Moreover, *Table 20* also shows that there was great variation even in terms of the frequency of occurrence of the different subtypes of complex ellipsis within the two languages. For instance, the English texts displayed quite a number of ellipses involving the subject and some verb form – namely, 29 (i.e., 1.32 per 1000 words) subject-and-verb ellipses, 69 (i.e., 3.14 per 1000 words) subject-and-existential ellipses, and 41 (i.e., 1.86 per 1000 words) subject-and-operator ellipses, respectively. In contrast, the other complex ellipsis subtypes (namely, verb-and-object, whole-predicate, and sluicing) were *rara avis* in the English corpus, where they had one (i.e., .04 per 1000 words), nine (i.e., .42 per 1000 words), and two (i.e., .09 per 1000 words) tallies, respectively.

The subtypes of complex ellipses in the Romanian texts were also considerably unequal, frequency-wise. Indeed, *Table 20* shows that, in turn, the Romanian texts displayed the tendency for complex ellipsis involving the subject and the verb to greatly outnumber the instances of verb-and-object ellipses, whole-predicate ellipses, and sluicing, respectively. Note, in this respect, that the straight language of arithmetic shows that 37 (i.e., 1.62 per 1000 words) of the 46 (i.e., 2.00 per 1000 words) complex ellipses found in the Romanian written discourse samples were subject-and-verb ellipses. In contrast, whole-predicate ellipses, verb-and-object ellipses, and instances of sluicing were considerably fewer – nine (i.e., .22 per 1000 words) and two (i.e., .09 per 1000 words) occurrences each, respectively.

A deeper study of the issue of complex ellipses in the two languages, as illustrated by the written discourse samples under discussion, is undertaken in subsections 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 to follow, where complex ellipses are discussed in terms of their locus in the clause and of their retrieval, respectively.

4.4.1. Complex ellipses in terms of locus

The findings arrived at following the study of the locus of the complex ellipses identified in the two corpora are summarized in *Table 21* below.

	Locus	Initial	Medial	Final	Total
Language					
English	– frequency	135 (89.4%)	4 (2.7%)	12 (7.9%)	151 (100%)
	– ratio	6.14	.18	.55	6.87
Romanian	– frequency	30 (65.2%)	8 (17.4%)	8 (17.4%)	46
	– ratio	1.30	.35	.35	2.00

Table 21. Complex ellipses in terms of locus

Table 21 above pinpoints the tendency, manifest in both the corpora under investigation, for clause-initial complex ellipses to outnumber non-initial ones. Indeed, as seen in the table, 135 (6.14 per 1000 words) of the 151 complex ellipses (6.87 per 1000 words) identified in the English corpus and 30 (1.30 per 1000 words) of the 46 complex ellipses (2.00 per 1000 words) identified in the Romanian corpus were isolated in initial position in the clause. In contrast, the English texts only displayed four (.35 per 1000 words) such ellipses in medial position and 12 (.55 per 1000 words) in clause-final position. As for the Romanian texts, they displayed eight (.35 per 1000 words) complex ellipses for each of the non-initial loci.

More depth in the study of the loci of the complex ellipses identified in the English and Romanian written discourse samples will be gained in subsections 4.4.1.1 through 4.4.1.3 below.

4.4.1.1. Complex ellipses in terms of locus – English texts

The findings relative to the locus of the complex ellipses found in the English texts are presented in *Table 22* below.

	Locus	Initial	Medial	Final	Total
Ellipsis subtype					
Subject-and-verb	– frequency	28	1	–	29
	– ratio	1.28	.04		1.32
Subject-and-existential	– frequency	66	3	–	69
	– ratio	3.00	.14		3.14
Subject-and-operator	– frequency	41	–	–	41
	– ratio	1.86			1.86
Verb-and-object	– frequency	–	–	1	1
	– ratio			.04	.04
Whole-predicate	– frequency	–	–	9	9
	– ratio			.42	.42
Sluicing	– frequency	–	–	2	2
	– ratio			.09	.09
Total	– frequency	135	4	12	151
	– ratio	6.14	.18	.55	6.87

Table 22. Complex ellipses in terms of ellipsis subtype and locus – English texts

A locus-based approach to *Table 22* indicates that no ellipses in the English texts were found to occur in all three loci. The subject-and-verb and the subject-and-existential ellipses occurred in two possible positions, while all the others only occurred in one. Moreover, even with the two subtypes of complex ellipsis that occurred in two loci, there was immense preference for initial position – note that 66 of the 69 subject-and-existential ellipses (i.e., 3.00 of the total of 3.14 per 1000 words) and 28 of the 29 subject-and-verb ellipses (i.e., 1.28 of the 1.32 per 1000 words) identified in the English texts were clause-initial, as opposed to the three (i.e., .14 per 1000 words) and one (i.e., .04 per thousand words) that occurred medially, respectively. The two loci are illustrated in examples [4.49] and [4.50] below (for subject-and-existential ellipses) and [4.51] and [4.52] below (for subject-and-verb ellipses), respectively.

[4.49] In a population of 23 million, *there are* 6 million retirees and [*there are*] only 4.3 million registered workers supporting them (NYT.R01, p.1 of 3).

[4.50] Somewhere – [*there was*] a siren. The ambulance was coming (Bradbury, p.279).

[4.51] *Elisa laid* his dark suit on the bed, and [*she laid*] shirt and socks and tie beside it

(Steinbeck, pp.213-214).

[4.52] "[*It*] *Makes* a minute seem like an hour, or maybe [*it makes*] an hour seem like a

minute?" (Bradbury, p.273)

The ellipses in sentences [4.49] and [4.51] above occur clause-initially, the former

(*there are*) being an ellipsis of subject-and-existential while the latter (*she laid*) is an in-

stance of subject-and-verb ellipsis. As for the ellipses of *there was* and *it makes* in [4.50]

and [4.52], respectively, they both occupy clause-medial position. Note that all the in-

stances of clause-medial subject-and-existential and/or subject-and-verb complex ellipsis

found in the English texts entailed an adverbial preceding the ellipsis site – see [4.50] and

[4.52] above.

Finally, *Table 22* shows that the subject-and-operator ellipses identified in the

English texts were always clause-initial (see sentence [4.53] below), while the instances

of verb-and-object, of whole-predicate, and of sluicing, respectively, never occurred in a

position other than clause-final – see sentences [4.54] through [4.56] below.

[4.53] *He has been giving* money and free meals to retirees and orphans and [*he has*

been] *calling* for the "mafia" he says runs the country to be brought to justice

(NYP.R01, p.2 of 3).

[4.54] "No! Don't *move me!*"

"We'll move him," said the voice casually.

"You idiots, you'll kill me, don't [*move me*]!" (Bradbury, p.278)

[4.55] They were all around him, these judges and jurors with the faces he had seen be-

fore... The freckled boy [*was there*]. The old man with the wrinkled upper lip

[*was there*]. The red-haired, red-cheeked woman [*was there*]. An old woman with

a mole on her chin [*was there*] (Bradbury, p.279).

[4.56] They always gather. And people, like you and I, have wondered from year after

year, why *they gathered so quickly*, and how [*they gathered so quickly*]

(Bradbury, p.277).

The clause-initial elliptical complex in sentence [4.53] above was made up of the

pronoun subject *he* and the perfective operator *has* plus the progressive auxiliary *been*.

As for the instances of ellipsis in [4.54] through [4.56], they involved a verb-and-object

complex (*move me*), a whole-predicate (*was there*), and a subject-and-predicate complex

(*they gathered so quickly*), respectively. All these ellipses were final in the clause.

The findings displayed in *Table 22* above seem to suggest, therefore, that there

exist certain restrictions as to the occurrence of certain subtypes of English complex el-

lipses in certain clause-positions. Indeed, none of the complex ellipses identified in the

English texts was found to occur in any one of the three potential loci. Moreover, the only

subtypes to have occurred in more than one position were the subject-and-existential one

and the subject-and-verb one, both of which were found either initially or medially – but

never finally – in the clause. It should be noted here that even with these two subtypes,

the English corpus under study exhibited strong preference for the clause-initial position

over the clause-medial positions. As for the remaining complex ellipsis subtypes (subject-

and-operator ellipsis, verb-and-object ellipsis, whole-predicate ellipsis, and sluicing),

they were only met with in one locus. More specifically, subject-and-operator ellipsis

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only occurred initially, while verb-and-object ellipsis, whole-predicate ellipsis, and sluic-ing, respectively, only occurred finally in the clause.

4.4.1.2. Complex ellipses in terms of locus – Romanian texts

The results of the locus-focused study of the instances of complex ellipsis found in the Romanian texts are presented in *Table 23* below.

Ellipsis subtype	Locus	Initial	Medial	Final	Total
Subject-and-verb	– frequency	29	7	1	37
	– ratio	1.26	.30	.04	1.60
Subject-and-existential	– frequency	–	–	–	–
	– ratio				
Subject-and-operator	– frequency	–	–	–	–
	– ratio				
Verb-and-object	– frequency	1	1	–	2
	– ratio	.04	.05		.09
Whole-predicate	– frequency	–	–	5	5
	– ratio			.22	.22
Sluicing	– frequency	–	–	2	2
	– ratio			.09	.09
Total	– frequency	30	8	8	46
	– ratio	1.30	.35	.35	2.00

Table 23. Complex ellipses in terms of ellipsis subtype and locus – Romanian texts

As seen in *Table 23* above, there was a strong tendency among complex ellipses in the Romanian corpus to occur initially in the clause. Indeed, 30 of the 46 complex el-lipses isolated in the Romanian texts were clause-initial, as opposed to the eight that were medial and the eight that were clause-final. Sentences [4.57] through [4.59] below are meant to illustrate instances of complex ellipsis occurring in clause-initial, clause-medial, and clause-final position, respectively.

[4.57] Pe masa cizmarului zăresc o pereche de sandale; nu seamănă cu ale mele. [*Ele sînt*] Două tălpi argintii, ca de mătase, cu cîte o pereche de șuvițe încrucișate, albe (Niculescu, p.90)

On table-the cobbler-the-of see-1st-sg one pair of sandals; not look-3rd-pl with the-of my. [*They are*] Two soles silvery, like of silk, with each a pair of stripes crossed, white

'On the cobbler's table I notice a pair of sandals; they are not like mine. Two silvery soles, as though of silk, with a pair each of crossed white bands' (Niculescu, p.91).

[4.58] Cînd ne apropiem, culoarea i se schimbă: întîi [*ea e*] pămîntie, apoi [*ea e/devine*] verde-palidă, cu pete cenușii de stîncă (Niculescu, p.82)

When ourselves draw-1st pl near, color-the to-it itself changes: first [*it is*] earthen, then [*it is/goes*] green-pale, with patches gray of rock

'As we approach, its colour changes: first earthen, then pale grey with patches of rock' (Niculescu, p.83).

[4.59] Cum a trecut de repede timpul, și totuși ce plin [*a fost el*]! (Niculescu, p.76)

How has passed of swiftly time-the, and yet how full [*has been it*]!

'How quickly the time has passed, and yet how full it has been!' (Niculescu, p.77)

In sentence [4.57] above, the left-out complex ellipsis *ele sînt* 'they are' occurs initially in the clause. In contrast, the ellipses of *ea e* 'it is' and *ea e/devine* 'it is/goes,' respectively, in [4.58] are clause-medial, both the ellipsis sites being preceded by adver-

bials – *întîi* 'first' and *apoi* 'then,' respectively. Finally, the ellipsis of *a fost el* 'it has been' in sentence [4.59] occurs in clause-final position.

Neither subject-and-operator ellipsis nor subject-and-existential ellipses ever emerged in the Romanian corpus (see the discussion in subsection 4.3 above). In contrast, as indicated by *Table 23*, all the other subtypes of complex ellipsis were met with in the texts under analysis. However, even among these latter subtypes there was discrepancy as to the clause-position they occupied. More specifically, whereas subject-and-verb complex ellipsis was identified in all the possible loci and verb-and-object ellipsis was found to occur either initially or medially, the remaining subtypes (whole-verb ellipsis and sluicing, respectively) only surfaced in final position in the clause.

As mentioned above, subject-and-verb was the only subtype of complex ellipsis isolated in the Romanian corpus to have occurred in any of the three loci. However, the three loci were not equally frequent. Indeed, clause-initial ellipses, with its 29 tallies out of the 37 subject-and-verb ellipses (i.e., 1.26 of 1.60 instances per 1000 words), clearly prevailed over either clause-medial or clause-final ellipses, which exhibited only seven and one (.30 and .04 per 1000 words, respectively). For instances of subject-and-verb ellipses occurring initially, medially, and finally in the clause, see examples [4.57] through [4.59] above.

Even though not a frequent presence in the Romanian texts (see *Table 23*), verb-and-object ellipsis was identified in two loci: initial and/or medial. More specifically, there was one instance where this subcategory of complex ellipsis occurred clause-medially and one where it occurred clause-finally. The two instances are presented in [4.60] and [4.61] below.

[4.60] [*Dă-ne*] Plata, meştere, că sîntem grăbiţi! (Eliade, p.12)

[*Give-us*] Bill-the, master, for are-1st-pl hurried

'Bill landlord; we're in a hurry!' (Eliade, p.13)

[4.61] ...un flăcău oacheş... împinge dindărăt ţapul, care... nu vrea să se urnească... De jos, însă, mecanicu-*l înhaţă* viclean de coarne şi celălalt [*îl înhaţă*] de coadă (Niculescu, p.80)

... a lad swarthy... pushes from-behind he-goat-the, who... not wants SUBJ himself move... From below, though, mechanic-the-*it grabs* cunningly by horns and other-the [*it grabs*] by tail

'... a swarthy youth is pushing the billy-goat from behind; the latter refuses to budge... But from below the engineer cunningly grabs it by the horns and the other man by the tail' (Niculescu, p.81).

The ellipted verb-and-object complex *dă-ne* 'give us' in [4.60] above occurs initially in the clause. The fact that the verb form is in the imperative mood makes overt presence of the subject redundant, and therefore the verb becomes irrefutably clause-initial. As for the complex ellipsis *îl înhaţă* 'grabs it' in [4.61], it occurs clause-medially, in that it is preceded by the overtly present subject *celălalt* 'the other.'

Unlike the subtypes of complex ellipses discussed above, which were found to occur in three – or at least two – positions in the clause, whole-predicate ellipses and sluicing only exhibited proneness to occur clause-finally in the Romanian corpus. Sentences [4.62] and [4.63] below are illustrations of an instance of whole-predicate ellipsis and one of sluicing, respectively, coming from the Romanian corpus.

[4.62]   Urciorul a dispărut. Trebuie *să-l fi luat* cine l-a pus. Bătrînul [*să-l fi luat*]...? Îl

aud în bucătărie (Niculescu, p.94)

Pitcher-the has vanished. Must *SUBJ-it be taken* who it-has put. Old-man-the

[*SUBJ-it be taken*]...? Him hear-1st-sg in kitchen

'The jug has vanished. Whoever put it there must have taken it. The old man? I

hear him in the kitchen' (Niculescu, p.95).

[4.63]   Aş vrea *s-o întreb* de un cizmar, însă nu ştiu cum [*s-o întreb*] (Niculescu, p.88)

Would-1st-sg want *SUBJ-her ask* of a cobbler, but not know-1st-sg how [*SUBJ-her*

ask]

'I should like to ask her about a cobbler, but I don't know how' (Niculescu, p.89).

In sentence [4.62] above, the whole-predicate ellipsis *să-l fi luat* 'must have taken

it' occurred finally in the clause; also final in the clause was the ellipsis of *s-o întreb* 'I

should ask her' following the complementizer *cum* 'how' in [4.63] above. Note that the

clause-final nature of these two ellipses was even emphasized by means of punctuation –

a question mark in [4.62] and a period in [4.63], respectively.

The findings in *Table 23* discussed above seem to indicate, therefore, a marked

tendency for complex ellipses in the Romanian texts to favor clause-initial position over

either clause-medial or clause-final position. The findings also suggest that, when it

comes to the clause-position in which a complex ellipsis can occur, there are certain con-

straints in the pathway of complex ellipsis usage in Romanian. Note in this respect that,

with the exception of subject-and-verb ellipsis, which was identified in any of the three

loci, the subcategories of complex ellipsis that surfaced in the Romanian texts failed to

show up in either one clause position – as in the case of verb-and-object ellipsis, which

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never occurred clause-finally – or even two clause positions – as was the case with whole-predicate ellipsis and sluicing, which were never found in a locus other than clause-final. Note, eventually, that absolutely no subject-and-operator and/or subject-and-existential ellipses were found in the Romanian corpus under study. Whereas any occurrence of the former is impossible in the language, given the absence of the category of operator in the syntax of Romanian, the latter is blocked by the impersonal nature of Romanian existential verbs.

4.4.1.3. A locus-based cross-linguistic approach to complex ellipses

A locus-based analysis of complex ellipsis in the two corpora seems to display both similarities and dissimilarities between the two languages. One of the similarities is that, in both languages, whole-predicate ellipsis and sluicing appear to only occur in final position in the clause. However, the relatively scarce occurrences of these complex ellipses do not allow for any generalizations. Note that the scarcity of whole-predicate ellipsis (.42 per 1000 words in English; .22 per 1000 words in Romanian) and sluicing (.09 per 1000 words in both the languages) – and, along with it, the even more pronounced scarcity of verb-and-object ellipses identified in the two languages (.04 per 1000 words in English; .09 per 1000 words in Romanian) – is suggestive of the minor nature of these complex ellipsis subtypes in actually occurring (written) discourse. This nature underlying the instances of whole-predicate ellipsis, verb-and-object ellipsis, and sluicing represents another similarity observed between the two languages under discussion.

Also to the chapter of similarities belongs the tendency, manifest in both the languages, for ellipses involving the clause subject-and-verb complex to occur more frequently than any other subtype of complex ellipsis. Also strong, in either language, was

the tendency for subject-and-verb ellipses to occur in clause-initial, rather than in non-initial, position.

Nevertheless, the subject-and-verb complex ellipsis subcategory revealed a dissimilarity between the two languages, as well. More specifically, whereas such ellipses were identified in any of the loci in the Romanian texts, they never occurred clause-finally in the English ones.

Moreover, the issue of subject-and-verb complex ellipsis also brought to the fore a second dissimilarity between the two languages. This difference revolves around the complex ellipsis subtypes of subject-and-operator and subject-and-existential ellipsis, respectively, which were frequently met with in the English written discourse samples but never emerged in the Romanian ones. The non-occurrence of the former subtype of ellipsis in the Romanian corpus is caused by the absence of the verbal category of operators in the Romanian language. As for the lack of subject-and-existential ellipsis in the Romanian texts, it seems to be rooted in that expressing existence in Romanian does not entail a subject (be it empty, even; cf. English *there*, French *il*, or German *es*); hence the tendency for Romanian existential ellipsis to fall under verb ellipsis, rather than complex ellipsis.

There were both similarities and dissimilarities in terms of the ellipses involving existential verbs isolated in the two corpora. One of the similarities has to do with the tendency for the ellipsis subtypes involving existential verbs to be the most frequent among the types they belong with – note that 2.00 out of 3.30 verbal ellipses per 1000 words in the Romanian texts and 3.00 out of 6.87 complex ellipses in the English ones involved deletion of an existential verb, and that these ellipses subtypes clearly outnum-

bered the other subtypes belonging to the same category. The second similarity lies in that both the existential verbal ellipses in the Romanian texts and the complex subject-and-verb ellipses in the English texts occurred either clause-initially or clause-medially, but never clause-finally.

Along with the two existential-related similarities presented above, there also surfaced two dissimilarities between the ellipses involving existentials identified in the written discourse samples under analysis. Indeed, as noted above, existential ellipses were considerably more frequent in English than they were in Romanian – 3.00 vs. 2.00 per 1000 words. Also, whereas the existential ellipses in the Romanian texts were numerically balanced across clause positions (24 initial ones vs. 22 medial ones), the elliptical constructions involving existential verbs in the English texts were very much skewed – 66 clause-initial ones vs. 3 medial ones.

A further dissimilarity between the two languages relates to locus of the verb-and-object complex ellipsis. More specifically, while the only instance of English verb-and-object ellipsis occurred clause-finally, the two Romanian verb-and-object ellipses were found to occur either initially or medially in the clause. Note nevertheless that the instances of verb-and-object ellipsis in either of the languages were too few to allow for any one-hundred-percent valid conclusions concerning such ellipsis.

4.4.2. Complex ellipses in terms of retrievability

The findings concerning the sphere of retrievability of the complex ellipses identified in the two corpora are presented in *Table 24* below.

Language	Retrievability	Textual		Situational	Total
		Anaphoric	Cataphoric		
English	– frequency	108 (71.5%)	–	43 (28.5%)	151 (100%)
	– ratio	4.91		1.96	6.87
Romanian	– frequency	25 (54.3%)	–	21 (45.7%)	46 (100%)
	– ratio	1.09		.91	2.00

Table 24. Complex ellipses in terms of retrievability

As seen in *Table 24* above, no complex ellipses at all, in either of the corpora, were retrieved cataphorically. This seems to suggest that neither language allows complex ellipsis cataphora in written discourse. As for the other two spheres of recoverability, the anaphorically-recoverable complex ellipses outnumbered the situationally-recoverable ones in both the corpora. However, the degree to which anaphora outweighed situational retrievability differed. More specifically, whereas in English the prevalence of anaphora was obvious, in that 108 (i.e., 71.5%) of the 151 complex ellipses in the corpus were recovered from the neighboring discourse, as opposed to the 43 (i.e., 28.5%) whose recovery was situationally based, the preference for anaphora was less obvious in Romanian, where the statistics were far more leveled – 25 (i.e., 54.3%) instances of anaphora vis-à-vis 21 (i.e., 45.7%) instances of situational recovery.

More insight into the issue of retrievability will be gained in subsections 4.4.2.1 through 4.4.2.3 below.

4.4.2.1. Complex ellipses in terms of retrievability – English texts

The retrievability-focused study of the complex ellipses in the English texts led to the results presented in *Table 25* below.

Ellipsis subtype	Locus	Textual Anaphoric	Textual Cataphoric	Situational	Total
Subject-and-verb	– frequency	25	–	4	29
	– ratio	1.14		.18	1.32
Subject-and-existential	– frequency	45	–	24	69
	– ratio	2.05		1.09	3.14
Subject-and-operator	– frequency	30	–	11	41
	– ratio	1.36		.50	1.86
Verb-and-object	– frequency	1	–	–	1
	– ratio	.04			.04
Whole-predicate	– frequency	5	–	4	9
	– ratio	.23		.19	.42
Sluicing	– frequency	2	–	–	2
	– ratio	.09			.09
Total	– frequency	108	–	43	151
	– ratio	4.91		1.96	6.87

Table 25. Complex ellipses in terms of ellipsis subtype and retrievability – English texts

When read in terms of retrievability, *Table 25* above indicates that all the sub-types of complex ellipsis identified in the English written discourse samples could base their recovery in the neighboring text. However, the different subtypes of complex ellipsis had different weights. More specifically, most of the 108 (4.91 per 1000 words) ana-phorically-recoverable instances of complex ellipsis that surfaced in the English texts be-longed to the subcategory of subject-and-existential; namely, 45 (2.05 per 1000 words) ellipses were labeled as subject-and-existential. For an instantiation of such an instance of complex ellipsis, see sentence [4.64] below.

[4.64] *It's* like that. [*It's*] Hot and sharp and—[*it's*] lovely (Steinbeck, p.211).

In sentence [4.64] above, two instances of the subject-and-existential complex ellipsis *it's* have been left out. Note the overt presence of the left-out element in the previous dis-course, which accounts for the anaphoric nature of the ellipses.

The second most frequent complex ellipsis anaphora in the English texts was the subject-and-operator ellipsis, which had 30 occurrences (1.36 per 1000 words) among the anaphorically-retrievable complex ellipses found in the corpus. Sentence [4.65] below illustrates such an instance of ellipsis.

[4.65] Evidently the red-haired woman *had seen* him coming and [*she had*] *run* off

(Bradbury, p.275).

In example [4.65], the second occurrence of the subject-and-operator complex *she had* has been ellipted in virtue of the ease of its recovery from the immediately preceding discourse. The ellipsis is, therefore, anaphoric in nature.

Also well represented, number-wise, in the English corpus was the subject-and-verb complex ellipsis – note that 25 (1.14 per 1000 words) of the anaphoric complex ellipses found in the English texts belonged to this subtype. Sentence [4.66] below provides an instance of such a complex ellipsis taken from one of the English texts under study.

[4.66] *Elisa laid* his dark suit on the bed, and [*she laid*] shirt and socks and tie beside it

(Steinbeck, pp.213-214).

The subject-and-verb complex in [4.66] above displays an overt presence in the immediately previous text, wherefrom it is easily retrievable; hence its anaphoric nature.

The remaining three complex ellipsis subcategories were less frequent in the English texts. Note, in this respect, that there were five whole-predicate ellipses (.23 per 1000 words), as opposed to the barely two (.09 per 1000 words) instances of sluicing and the one (.04 per 1000 words) of verb-and-object ellipsis. For illustrations of these subtypes of complex ellipsis, see sentences [4.67] through [4.69] below.

[4.67] "No! Don't *move me!*"

"We'll move him," said the voice casually.

"You idiots, you'll kill me, don't [*move me*]!" (Bradbury, p.278)

[4.68] When voters were asked which candidate *shared their view of government*, about

a third said Mr. Gore [*shared their view of government/did*], about a third said Mr.

Bush [*shared their view of government/did*], and the rest said both [*shared their*

view of government/did] or neither [*shared their view of government/did*]

(NYT.A01, p.3 of 4).

[4.69] They always gather. And people, like you and I, have wondered from year after

year, why *they gathered so quickly*, and how [*they gathered so quickly*]

(Bradbury, p.277).

In sentence [4.67], the retrieval of the ellipted verb-and-object complex *move me*

relies on its overt presence in the previous discourse. Likewise, both the recovery of the

whole-verb ellipsis *shared their view of government/did* in [4.68] and the recovery of the

sluiced *they gathered so quickly* in [4.69] are only made possible given their overt pres-

ence in the previous discourse. All these represent, therefore, instances of anaphora.

Along with anaphorically-retrievable complex ellipses, the English corpus also

exhibited situationally-retrievable ones. As mentioned earlier, nevertheless, situational

recovery was less frequently met with than was anaphoric recovery – 43 vs. 108 (1.96 per

1000 words vs. 4.91 per 1000 words). Of the 43 situationally-recoverable complex ellip-

ses, 24 (1.09 per 1000 words) belonged to the subject-and-existential subcategory. An

instance of such an ellipsis is given in [4.70] below.

[4.70] Words were painted on the canvas in clumsy, crooked letters. "Pots, pans, knives, sisors, lawn mores. Fixed." [*There were*] Two rows of articles and the triumphantly definitive "Fixed" below (Steinbeck, pp.207-208).

In example [4.70] above, the last sentence is devoid of its subject and verb. The missing complex is not present elsewhere in the neighboring discourse. Therefore, it cannot be retrieved from there. However, comprehension of the text requires the insertion of a subject and a verb – and the handiest solution seems to be the insertion of the empty subject *there* and the existential *were*. The retrieval of the left-out subject-and-existential complex is based in the context of situation.

Also quite frequent among situationally-retrievable complex ellipses were the subject-and-operator ellipses, which had 11 occurrences in the English texts – i.e., a ratio of .50 per 1000 words. An instance of such an ellipsis is given in sentence [4.71] below.

[4.71] "This is one helluva town to drive in. [*We've*] Got an accident up ahead. [*Do you*] Want me to detour?" (Bradbury, p.273)

Neither the first nor the second ellipted subject-and-operator complex (*we've* and *do you*, respectively) in example [4.71] above is present in the neighboring discourse. As a result, the recovery of either is only possible from the extralinguistic context.

Situational subject-and-verb ellipsis and whole-predicate ellipsis each had four occurrences in the English texts. Consequently, they displayed a ratio of .19 per 1000 words each. Sentences [4.72] and [4.73] below are meant to exemplify these subcategories of complex ellipsis.

[4.72] He awoke. [*He saw*] Sunlight, a hospital room, a hand taking his pulse (Bradbury, p.272).

[4.73] They were all around him, these judges and jurors with the faces he had seen before... The freckled boy [*was there*]. The old man with the wrinkled upper lip [*was there*]. The red-haired, red-cheeked woman [*was there*]. An old woman with a mole on her chin [*was there*] (Bradbury, p.279).

In examples [4.72] and [4.73] above, the left-out subject-and-verb complex *he saw* and the whole-predicate ellipsis *was there*, respectively, are nowhere to be found in the neighboring text. Therefore, their insertion is dictated by extralinguistic factors; in other words, they are both instances of situational retrievability.

It should be noted here that, as mentioned above, two of the subtypes of complex ellipsis – namely, verb-and-object ellipsis and sluicing – were never found to be situationally retrievable in the English corpus. This lack might be suggestive of a restriction in English written discourse against these complex ellipsis subtypes.

Along with the retrievability-focused reading outlined so far, *Table 25* above also allows a reading in terms of ellipsis subtype. In terms of the latter interpretation, four of the subtypes of complex ellipsis found in the English written discourse samples were recoverable either from the previous discourse (anaphoric recoverability) or from the extralinguistic context (situational recoverability). The four subcategories were as follows: subject-and-existential ellipsis, subject-and-operator ellipsis, subject-and-verb ellipsis, and whole-predicate ellipsis. The remaining complex ellipsis subtypes – verb-and-object and sluicing, respectively – were, as mentioned above, only found to be anaphorically retrievable in the English texts.

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Note should be made here that the subtypes of complex ellipsis that were found to accept being retrieved both anaphorically and situationally did not all occur equally often. For instance, subject-and-existential ellipses were far more frequent than subject-and-verb ellipses – 3.14 vs. 1.32 per 1000 words. Also, anaphoric retrievability was found to always occur more often than situational retrievability. For instance, of the 69 (i.e., 3.14 per 1000 words) instances of subject-and-existential complex ellipsis identified in the English corpus, 45 (i.e., 2.05 per 1000 words) were retrieved from the previous discourse, as opposed to the 24 (i.e., 1.09 per 1000 words) that were situational in nature. For illustrations of the two retrievability options among subject-and-existential ellipses in the English texts, see examples [4.74] and [4.75] below.

[4.74] *It's* like that. [*It's*] Hot and sharp and—[*it's*] lovely (Steinbeck, p.211).

[4.75] Words were painted on the canvas in clumsy, crooked letters. "Pots, pans, knives, sisors, lawn mores. Fixed." [*There were*] Two rows of articles and the triumphantly definitive "Fixed" below (Steinbeck, pp.207-208).

In example [4.74] above, the retrieval of *it's* is based anaphorically, in that it is overtly present in the previous discourse. In contrast, *there were* in [4.75] is nowhere to be found in the neighboring text, whether preceding the ellipsis site or following it; hence the situational nature of its retrieval.

An ellipsis-subtype focused reading of *Table 25* above also reveals that there were 41 (i.e., 1.86 per 1000 words) instances of subject-and-operator ellipsis in the English texts, of which 30 (i.e., 1.36 per 1000 words) were recovered from the previous text and

11 (i.e., .50 per 1000 words) from the context of situation. Sentences [4.76] and [4.77] below illustrate the two options of subject-and-operator ellipsis recovery.

[4.76] *He has been giving* money and free meals to retirees and orphans and [*he has been*] *calling* for the "mafia" he says runs the country to be brought to justice (NYP.R01, p.2 of 3).

[4.77] "This is one helluva town to drive in. [*We've*] Got an accident up ahead. [*Do you*] Want me to detour?" (Bradbury, p.273)

The subject-and-operator ellipsis *he has been* in sentence [4.76] above is recovered from the previous text, where it is overtly present. In contrast, neither *we've* nor *do you* in example [4.77] can be found anywhere in the neighboring discourse, be it previous or subsequent. It follows therefore that they are both situational in nature.

Even though less frequently met with than the subject-and-existential and subject-and-operator subtypes discussed above, subject-and-verb complex ellipsis was quite an active presence in the English corpus, where it had 29 occurrences – i.e., a ratio of 1.32 per 1000 words. Of these, 25 (i.e., 1.14 per 1000 words) were anaphoric in nature, while the remaining four (.18 per 1000 words) were situational. Sentences [4.78] and [4.79] below provide an instance of anaphoric and one of situational subject-and-verb ellipsis, respectively.

[4.78] *Elisa laid* his dark suit on the bed, and [*she laid*] shirt and socks and tie beside it (Steinbeck, pp.213-214).

[4.79] He awoke. [*He saw*] Sunlight, a hospital room, a hand taking his pulse (Bradbury, p.272).

In the case of the subject-and-verb ellipsis in [4.78], the retrieval is anaphoric – notice the overt presence of *she laid* in the previous discourse. As for the subject-and-verb complex *he saw* in example [4.79], its recovery is situational in nature, in that insertion thereof entails creativity on the part of the reader. Note, in this respect, that in lieu of *he saw* the reader could have come up with other slot-fillers, as well. However, this creativity could not have affected the nature of the missing complex: it had to be a subject-and-verb one.

The least frequent subcategory of complex ellipsis identified in the English corpus that was recovered either anaphorically or situationally was whole-predicate ellipsis. There were 9 instances thereof, which translates as a ratio of .42 per 1000 words; of these, five (i.e., .23 per 1000 words) were anaphoric and four (i.e., .19 per 1000 words) situational in nature. Sentences [4.80] and [4.81] below exemplify the two possibilities of retrieving whole-predicate ellipsis encountered in the English texts.

[4.80] When voters were asked which candidate *shared their view of government*, about a third said Mr. Gore [*shared their view of government/did*], about a third said Mr. Bush [*shared their view of government/did*], and the rest said both [*shared their view of government/did*] or neither [*shared their view of government/did*] (NYT.A01, p.3 of 4).

[4.81] They were all around him, these judges and jurors with the faces he had seen before... The freckled boy [*was there*]. The old man with the wrinkled upper lip

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[*was there*]. The red-haired, red-cheeked woman [*was there*]. An old woman with a mole on her chin [*was there*] (Bradbury, p.279).

Both the examples above are instances of whole-predicate ellipsis, in that in both the only left-over elements fulfill the role of subject – *Mr. Gore, Mr. Bush, both,* and *neither* in [4.80]; *the freckled boy, the old man with the wrinkled upper lip, the red-haired, red-cheeked woman,* and *an old woman with a mole on her chin* in [4.81], respectively. In sentence [4.80], the left-out predicate is, in all likelihood, *did* – which substitutes for *shared their view of government*; as for the predicate of [4.81], it most probably is *was there*. The difference between the two instances of whole-predicate ellipsis lies in that the substitute *did* has an overtly present antecedent (and therefore is anaphoric in nature), while *was there* does not have one – and hence is situational.

To sum up the discussion of *Table 25* above, cataphora does not seem to be a valid option with complex ellipses in the English language. As for anaphora and situational retrieval, they can both occur with subject-and-verb, subject-and-existential, subject-and-operator, and whole-predicate ellipsis alike – with the amendment that, with all of these subcategories of complex ellipsis, anaphora seems to prevail. In contrast, anaphora seems to be the only valid option when it comes to the other two complex ellipsis subtypes – verb-and-object ellipsis and sluicing, respectively.

4.4.2.2. Complex ellipses in terms of retrievability – Romanian texts

The findings relative to the analysis in terms of retrievability of the complex ellipsis subtypes found in the Romanian written discourse samples are presented in *Table 26* below.

Ellipsis subtype	Locus	Textual		Situational	Total
		Anaphoric	Cataphoric		
Subject-and-verb	– frequency	20	–	17	37
	– ratio	.87		.73	1.60
Subject-and-existential	– frequency	–	–	–	–
	– ratio				
Subject-and-operator	– frequency	–	–	–	–
	– ratio				
Verb-and-object	– frequency	1	–	1	2
	– ratio	.04		.05	.09
Whole-predicate	– frequency	2	–	3	5
	– ratio	.09		.13	.22
Sluicing	– frequency	2	–	–	2
	– ratio	.09			.09
Total	– frequency	25	–	21	46
	– ratio	1.09		.91	2.00

Table 26. Complex ellipses in terms of ellipsis subtype and retrievability – Romanian texts

One of the things that strike one's eyes in *Table 26* above is the total lack of cataphora among the complex ellipses identified in the texts. As mentioned earlier in this study, this seems to indicate absence thereof in Romanian written discourse. Another thing the table brings to the fore is the potential for some of the complex ellipsis subtypes identified in the Romanian corpus (namely, subject–and–verb, verb–and–object, and whole–predicate ellipsis) to be either anaphorically or situationally retrievable. In contrast, sluicing was found to always be anaphoric in nature.

A retrievability-based reading of *Table 26* above indicates that most of the anaphorically-recoverable complex ellipses found in the Romanian texts (namely, 20 of 25, i.e., .87 of 1.09 per 1000 words) involved a subject–and–verb complex. Sentence [4.82] below is meant to exemplify such an instance.

[4.82] În timp ce-mi repară sandala, [el] povestește despre traiul tihnit din insulă, unde

[el] cîştigă puțin, însă [el cîştigă] de ajuns pentru familia lui (Niculescu, p.90)

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In time that-to-me repairs sandal-the, [he] tells about life-the quiet in island,

where [*he*] *earns* little, but [*he earns*] enough for family-the his

'While he repairs my sandal, he talks of the quiet life of the island, where he earns

little, but enough for his family' (Niculescu, p.91).

In sentence [4.82] above, the subject-and-verb complex ellipsis *el cîştigă* 'he earns' in the

last clause is easy to retrieve from the preceding clause, where it is overtly present. It fol-

lows therefore that the recovery is anaphoric in nature.

The other ellipsis subtypes recoverable from the previous text (namely, verb-and-

object ellipsis, whole-predicate ellipsis, and sluicing) identified in the Romanian corpus

were far less frequently encountered. Thus, verb-and-object ellipsis had only one such

occurrence (.04 per 1000 words), while whole-predicate ellipsis and sluicing had two

such occurrences each (i.e., .09 per 1000 words). Sentences [4.83] through [4.85] below

provide an instance of anaphorically-retrievable verb-and-object ellipsis, whole-predicate

ellipsis, and sluicing, respectively.

[4.83] ...un flăcău oacheş... împinge dindărăt ţapul, care... nu vrea să se urnească... De

jos, însă, mecanicu-*l înhaţă* viclean de coarne şi celălalt [*il înhaţă*] de coadă (Ni-

culescu, p.80)

... a lad swarthy... pushes from-behind he-goat-the, who... not wants to himself

move... From below, though, mechanic-the-*it grabs* cunningly by horns and

other-the [*it grabs*] by tail

'... a swarthy youth is pushing the billy-goat from behind; the latter refuses to

budge... But from below the engineer cunningly grabs it by the horns and the

other man by the tail' (Niculescu, p.81).

[4.84] Urciorul a dispărut. Trebuie *să-l fi luat* cine l-a pus. Bătrînul [*să-l fi luat*]...? Îl

aud în bucătărie (Niculescu, p.94)

Pitcher-the has vanished. Must *SUBJ-it be taken* who it-has put. Old-man-the

[*SUBJ-it be taken*]...? Him hear-1st-sg in kitchen

'The jug has vanished. Whoever put it there must have taken it. The old man? I

hear him in the kitchen' (Niculescu, p.95).

[4.85] Aş vrea *s-o întreb* de un cizmar, însă nu ştiu cum [*s-o întreb*] (Niculescu, p.88)

Would-1st-sg want *SUBJ-her ask* of a cobbler, but not know-1st-sg how [*SUBJ-her*

ask]

'I should like to ask her about a cobbler, but I don't know how' (Niculescu, p.89).

In examples [4.83] through [4.85] above, the verb-and-object ellipsis *îl înhaţă*
'grabs it,' the whole-predicate ellipsis *să-l fi luat* 'must have taken it,' and the sluicing *s-
o întreb* 'I should ask her,' respectively, are all understood due to their overt presence in
the previous discourse; hence their anaphoric nature.

In addition to the anaphoric complex ellipses discussed thus far, the Romanian
corpus also displayed 21 instances (.91 per 1000 words) of complex ellipsis where recov-
ery was situational in nature – see *Table 26* above. Among these ellipses, the subject-and-
verb subcategory had by far the most occurrences – 17 (i.e., .73 per 1000 words). Here is
an instance of such a complex ellipsis taken from one of the Romanian texts.

[4.86] Cum a trecut de repede timpul, şi totuşi ce plin [*a fost el*]! (Niculescu, p.76)

How has passed of swiftly time-the, and yet how full [*has been it*]!

'How quickly the time has passed, and yet how full it has been!' (Niculescu, p.77)

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Neither the previous discourse nor the discourse to follow carries an antecedent for the subject-and-verb ellipsis *a fost el* 'it was' in [4.86] above. Therefore, the ellipsis retrieval is situational, rather than textual, in nature.

Situational recovery of a complex ellipsis was also possible with whole-predicate ellipsis and verb-and-object ellipsis. However, neither of these subtypes was very frequently met with in the Romanian texts. Indeed, there were no more than three instances of situationally-recoverable whole-predicate ellipsis – and one of verb-and-object ellipsis. If translated into ratios, these instances represent .05 and .13 per 1000 words, respectively, of the situationally-retrievable complex ellipses in the Romanian texts. Sentence [4.87] below provides an instance of whole-predicate ellipsis, while sentence [4.88] carries the only instance of situational verb-and-object ellipsis found in the corpus under study.

[4.87] El explică cauzele acestui vot, aşa cum le-a înţeles PNŢCD: "Sărăcia şi lipsa de educaţie a oamenilor [*au fost factorii decisivi*]" (Adev.R03, p.5 of 7)

He explains causes-the this-the-of vote, like how them-has understood CDNPP (Christian-Democratic National Peasant Party-the): "Poverty-the and lack-the of education of people-the-of [*were factors-the decisive*]

'He explains the causes of this vote, the way the CDNPP has understood them: "Poverty and lack of education on the people's part." '

[4.88] [*Dă-ne*] Plata, meştere, că sîntem grăbiţi! (Eliade, p.12)

[*Give-us*] Bill-the, master, for are-1st-pl hurried

'Bill landlord; we're in a hurry!' (Eliade, p.13)

In example [4.87] above, the predicate (presumably, *au fost factorii decisivi* 'were the decisive factors') is missing and has to be recreated by the reader. As for [4.88] above, it has in all likelihood ellipted the imperative-plus-object form *dă-ne* 'give-us.' In both these instances, recreation of the text is somewhat tentative, in that it is situationally-, rather than textually-based, and it necessitates creativity on the part of the reader.

Along with the retrievability-focused reading, *Table 26* above allows a subtype-focused reading, as well. As indicated by the table, Romanian written discourse allows subject-and-verb ellipsis, verb-and-object ellipsis, and whole-predicate ellipsis alike to be retrieved from either the previous text or the extralinguistic context. For instance, in sentences [4.82], [4.83], and [4.84] above, the left-out complexes (the subject-and-verb complex *el cîştigă* 'he earns,' the verb-and-object complex *îl înhaţă* 'grabs it,' and the predicate *să-l fi luat* 'must have taken it,' respectively) are all overtly present in the previous text. Therefore, they are anaphoric in nature. In contrast, the ellipted complexes in [4.86], [4.88], and [4.87] above (the subject-and-verb complex *a fost el* 'it was,' the verb-and-object complex *dă-ne* 'give us,' and the predicate *au fost factorii decisivi* 'were the decisive factors' are not present in the neighboring discourse, and they need to be recreated based on the extralinguistic context wherein they are found; hence their situational nature.

As noticed in *Table 26* and the discussion of the retrievability of the Romanian complex ellipses identified in the corpus under analysis, Romanian written discourse seems to disallow cataphoric recovery of any subcategory of complex ellipsis. Anyway, no instances whatsoever of complex ellipsis cataphora were encountered in the Romanian texts. Other than that, my study revealed the potential for either anaphoric or situational

retrieval with complex ellipses – with the exception of sluicing, which only occurred where anaphorically retrievable. The fact that sluicing was never situational in nature might be indicative of restrictions in this respect operating in the Romanian language. Notice should be made also of the relative equilibrium found between the number of instances of anaphoric retrieval and the number of instances of situational retrieval, with the former barely outweighing the latter.

4.4.2.3. A retrievability-based cross-linguistic approach to complex ellipses

A contrastive study of the issue of retrieval of complex ellipsis in English and Romanian points to both similarity and dissimilarity between the two languages. One of the similarities relates to the lack of cataphoric retrievability in either of the languages. This seems to suggest that there is something about cataphora which makes it undesirable in written discourse in both English and Romanian. Another similarity noticed cross-linguistically relates to the tendency (marked, in English; barely noticeable, in Romanian) for anaphora to prevail over situational recoverability.

A further similarity between the two languages revolves around sluicing. More specifically, it has to do with the necessarily text-bound nature all the instances of sluicing identified in the two languages display; indeed, no instances of sluicing whatsoever were found to be situationally recoverable in either English or Romanian.

An important retrievability-related dissimilarity noted between the two languages revolves around the verb-and-object and whole-predicate subtypes. More specifically, while English seems to restrict such ellipses to the sphere of anaphoric retrievability only, Romanian readily accepts both anaphora and situational retrieval with either verb-and-object ellipses or whole-predicate ellipses.

4.5. Ellipses across linguistic borders – a contrastive view

A contrastive study of the nominal, verbal, and complex ellipses identified in the English and Romanian texts, respectively, reveals several similarities, but also quite a number of dissimilarities between the two languages. An overlap of utmost importance seems to be that both the languages allow nominal, verbal, and complex ellipsis alike. In both the languages, nominal ellipses prevailed; in contrast, both the languages exhibited a relatively low rate of occurrence of verbal ellipses. Likewise, both the languages displayed overt preference for instances of complex ellipsis involving a subject and (part of) its verb to instances of verb and object ellipsis, whole-predicate ellipsis, and/or sluicing. Another similarity noticed across linguistic borders had to do with ellipses of existential verbs. Indeed, both the languages exhibited existential ellipsis; moreover, ellipsis involving an existential was the subtype most frequently met with in the category of ellipsis it belonged with (verbal ellipsis in Romanian and complex ellipsis in English, respectively).

One of the important locus-related similarities surfacing in my crosslinguistic study was the tendency for ellipses in both the languages to occupy clause-initial, rather than clause-medial and/or clause-final, position. This tendency was particularly noticed about nominal ellipses and complex ellipses. However, not all the complex ellipses followed this pattern – note that whole-predicate ellipsis and sluicing always occurred finally in the clause. No locus-related preferences were noticed about verbal ellipses, except for one concerning the locus of gapping, which always occurred clause-medially. Also to the sphere of locus-related similarities belongs the possibility that clause-medial nominal ellipses in either of the languages fulfill either the syntactic role of subject or that of object; if the former, the element preceding the ellipted subject was always an ad-

verbial. A final notice made relative to locus-related similarities between the two languages has to do with left-out existential verbs. More specifically, existential ellipses occurred initially and also medially in the clause in either of the languages; however, they were never isolated in clause-final position.

Retrievability-wise, both the English and the Romanian texts exhibited the tendency for nominal ellipses and complex ellipses to be textual, rather than situational. This was particularly true for the instances of sluicing, which were always anaphorically retrievable. Note nevertheless that no such preference was noticed about verbal ellipses, which displayed a remarkable numerical equilibrium between textual (more specifically, anaphoric) and situational retrievability. Where textual retrievability of nominal ellipses was the case, it was more often than not anaphoric, rather than cataphoric. No instances whatsoever of cataphora were identified either among verbal ellipses or among complex ellipses in either of the languages. Finally, anaphorically-retrievable subjects were greatly favored over anaphorically-retrievable objects in both the languages.

Along with the similarities discussed above, the two languages revealed quite a few dissimilarities, as well. For instance, the ratio per 1000 words of the ellipses found in the Romanian texts greatly outweighed the ellipsis ratio in the English texts. This was true for the overall ratios, but was particularly pronounced with subject ellipses and verbal ellipses. The situation was reversed when it comes to object ellipses and complex ellipses, in that these were better represented in the English texts than in the Romanian texts. Note nevertheless that even though somewhat more numerous, object ellipses were still relatively infrequent even in English.

Another notable dissimilarity has to do with existentials, and it surfaced both in terms of categorical belonging and in terms of ratios. More specifically, existential ellipsis was verbal in nature in Romanian, but complex in English. This was so because, whereas existential expressions have inexpressible subjects in Romanian, they need a subject in English (be it an empty one, even). In the event of ellipsis of an existential, therefore, ellipsis only affects the verb itself in Romanian, but entails deletion of the subject along with the verb in English. A third syntax-related dissimilarity noticed during the crosslinguistic study has its roots in the absence of the operator category in Romanian, which makes both operator ellipsis and subject-and-operator ellipsis English-specific phenomena. Another English-only phenomenon (main verb ellipsis) was the cause of a further dissimilarity between the two languages.

Dissimilarities were noticed in terms of the locus in the clause of the ellipted element(s), as well. For instance, both the subcategories of nominal ellipsis (subject ellipsis and object ellipsis, respectively) in the Romanian texts could occur in any of the clause-positions. This was not the case with the English texts, which displayed no clause-final subject ellipses and no clause-initial object ellipses whatsoever. Likewise, complex ellipses involving a subject and its verb, which could occur anywhere in Romanian, were never identified in clause final position in English. In contrast, verbal ellipsis was noticed to occur in any of the three loci in English, but was never identified clause-finally in the Romanian texts. Finally, the instances of ellipsis involving existentials met with in the English texts were fairly split between the two loci in which they occurred – initial and medial, respectively. No such numerical balance was found in the Romanian texts, where the clause-initial position was greatly favored over the clause-medial one.

The retrievability factor also differentiated between the languages analyzed. For instance, whereas situational retrievability was quite frequent among Romanian nominal ellipses, it never occurred in the English texts. In contrast, whereas cataphora was found both with subject ellipses and with object ellipses in English (note that the latter prevailed, even), it was restricted to subject ellipsis only in the Romanian texts. Within the instances of gapping, the Romanian texts showed a preference for anaphoric, rather than situational, retrieval; no such preference was noticed in the English texts, where anaphoric retrievability and situational retrievability were numerically balanced. A further dissimilarity was noticed with respect to verb-and-object and whole-predicate ellipses. Whereas in the English texts such ellipses were always anaphoric in nature, in the Romanian corpus they were retrieved either from the previous context or from the extralinguistic context.

Chapter V

Conclusions

The present study was meant to be a crosslinguistic investigation into the locus and retrievability of nominal, verbal, and complex ellipses in English and Romanian written discourse. The main reason behind the study was to identify the areas of similarity and the areas of dissimilarity in terms of ellipsis usage between the two languages.

Quite a number of similarities were noticed during the analysis. For instance, it became evident that nominal ellipses tend to outnumber both verbal and complex ellipses in both the languages under discussion. Moreover, when it comes to the former, ellipsis of a nominal element fulfilling the syntactic role of subject seems to greatly prevail over ellipsis of an object, which – even though grammatically acceptable – does not appear to be a very common phenomenon in either of the languages. These findings are consistent with those reported in Meyer (1979; 1995). Both Meyer's findings and mine validate the Sanders (1977) and Greenbaum and Meyer (1982) postulate, whereby D-ellipsis (which, in SVO languages like English and Romanian, typically denotes ellipsis of the subject) is preferred to any of the other ellipsis types acceptable in a language. In spite of the fact that I did not count pro-drop as ellipsis, the tendency for subject ellipsis to be favored over object ellipsis was more obvious in the case of Romanian, which is a pro-drop language, than in English, which is non-drop. This confirms the findings of Bates and Devescovi (1989) and López (1999), who also noted the marked tendency for subject ellip-

ses in pro-drop languages (Hungarian and Italian, with the former; Spanish, with the latter) to occur far more frequently than in English. Another finding surfacing in my contrastive study that validates Sanders (1977) and Greenbaum and Meyer's (1982) claim concerning the prevalence of ellipses in clause-initial position over non-initial ones is the high rate of occurrence of complex ellipses involving a subject and (part of) its verb. Such ellipses are, in turn, typically clause-initial in SVO languages.

A further locus-related similarity noticed during my contrastive investigation of English and Romanian written discourse revolves around the tendency for verbal ellipses in either of the languages to favor medial position over initial position. This finding disproves Greenbaum and Meyer's (1982) generalization that D- (i.e., clause-initial) ellipsis tends to be preferred to both E- (i.e., clause-medial) and C- (i.e., clause-final) ellipsis. While D is favored over either E or C when locus is seen across categories of ellipsis, it seems not to necessarily be preferred when the potential loci are analyzed within one and the same category.

Other similarities noticed in my crosslinguistic study have to do with ellipses involving existential verbs. More specifically, existential ellipses – which appear to be the most widely used ones within the categories they belong to (verbal, in Romanian; complex, in English) – never surfaced clause-finally in my data. This seems to suggest that existential ellipsis disallows clause-final position in either of the languages.

In contrast, other subtypes of ellipsis met with in the texts under analysis (namely, whole-predicate ellipsis and sluicing) only occurred clause-finally, while gapping only occurred clause-medially. The reason why that was the case lies in the very definitions of these subcategories of ellipsis. Indeed, whereas the need for whole-predicate ellipsis and

sluicing to be final in the clause has to do with the SVO syntax of both English and Romanian, which makes it obligatory for the predicate to be clause-final, gapping entails deletion of a verb form from between its subject and its object/complementation, which makes it always occur medially in the clause .

A commonality about gapping, whole-predicate ellipsis, and sluicing lies in their relatively low rate of frequency in the corpora under analysis, which makes me wonder whether the enormous interest gapping and sluicing have raised in the literature is justified. The dichotomy between the vast focus of these ellipsis subcategories in linguists' interest and their low rate of occurrence in real discourse stresses the need for any discussion of language phenomena to focus on naturally-occurring, rather than on potentially-encounterable, language.

Another likeness surfacing in my crosslinguistic analysis has to do with the preference in both the languages for textually-, rather than extralinguistically-, retrievable nominal and complex ellipses, and with the tendency for textually-retrievable ellipses to be anaphoric, rather than cataphoric. These findings converge with those presented in Meyer (1995). However, my findings relative to verbal ellipses diverge from this pattern, in that verbal cataphora seems to be as valid an option as verbal anaphora – nay, judging by my statistics, it seems to even be preferred.

The last similarity lies in the openness of nominal ellipses in both English and Romanian to both anaphoric and cataphoric retrieval. Given that nominal ellipses neither contain a verb nor entail clause-final position, this two-pronged retrievability of nominal ellipses in both the languages might be seen as invalidating van Oirsouw's (1987) claim that any site that can accept both anaphoric and cataphoric ellipsis will, as a rule, either

contain a verb or occur clause-finally. However, the invalidation at issue is the outcome of my lack of differentiation between total ellipsis of a nominal element and partial ellipsis thereof – a differentiation van Oirsouw seems to have made, judging by the examples he discusses, where nominal ellipses are always total.

In addition to the similarities discussed above, my study also revealed several differences in terms of nominal, verbal, and complex ellipsis usage in the two languages. Some of these dissimilarities have to do with occurrence rate. For instance, whereas both subject ellipsis and verbal ellipsis seem to be much more frequent in Romanian than in English, the reverse appears to be the case with object ellipsis and complex ellipsis, where English seemingly prevails. Ellipses involving existential verbs also appear to indicate different tendencies in the two languages: whereas apparently equally open to either clause-initial or clause-medial position in English, they tend to be clause-initial, rather than clause-medial, in Romanian.

Other dissimilarities are rooted in the syntax of the two languages. For instance, while both operator ellipses and subject-and-operator ellipses are quite frequent in English, neither will ever occur in Romanian, where the category normally referred to as 'operator' does not exist and, hence, cannot ellipt. Equally impossible in Romanian is main-verb ellipsis. My finding relative to the absence in the Romanian texts of this latter sub-category of verbal ellipsis validates the claim that main-verb ellipsis is an English-specific rule (see Jackendoff, 1971; van Oirsouw, 1987).

A further class of differences between English and Romanian ellipses is locus-related. More specifically, these dissimilarities translate as the possibility for certain ellipsis subcategories to occur anywhere in one of the languages, but not in the other. For

example, verbal ellipsis can occur anywhere in English, but it seems to disallow clause-final position in Romanian. In contrast, both the subtypes of nominal ellipsis (subject ellipsis and object ellipsis, respectively) can occur anywhere in Romanian. This is not the case in English, where object ellipsis seems to only allow clause-final position.

The last area of dissimilarity between English and Romanian written discourse has to do with retrievability. One such difference lies in that, while frequent in the Romanian texts, situational nominal ellipsis never surfaced in the English ones. Other such differences involve gapping, on the one hand, and verb-and-object and whole-verb ellipsis, on the other. The former tends to always be anaphoric in Romanian, but seems to be equally open to anaphoric and situational retrieval in English. As for the latter, they seem to entail anaphoricity in English, but can be either anaphoric or situational in Romanian.

As may have become clear, my crosslinguistic analysis brought to the fore both similarities and dissimilarities in terms of ellipsis usage in English and Romanian written discourse. Whereas the similarities have their roots in the universal nature of ellipsis, most of the dissimilarities are the logical outcome of the differences at play between the two languages in terms of morphology and syntax. At any rate, more research – possibly, encompassing oral discourse along with other genres of written discourse – needs to be undertaken with a view to fully validating the findings of this study.

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Appendix

Newspaper articles under analysis, in terms of coding

The New York Post:

NYP.A01: D. Orin & M. Rauber (2000, No. 8). Incredible race ain't over. The New York

Post [Online]. Available:

http://nypostonline.com/campaign2000/15202.htm [2000, Nov. 8, 8:46

p.m. CST].

NYP.A02: B. Blomquist, D. Orin, & M. (2000, Nov. 9). Gore still swinging as Florida re-

tallies. The New York Post [Online]. Available:

http://nypostonline.com/campaign2000/15323.htm [2000, Nov. 8, 9:09

p.m. CST].

NYP.A03: D. Orin (2000, Nov. 9). Go-go Gore vs. laid-back Bush. The New York Post

[Online]. Available: http://nypostonline.com/campaign2000/15318.htm

[2000, Nov. 9, 9:11 a.m. CST].

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